ERIC Document Resume | **See Instruction Sheet** | **DATE OF RESUME** | **DATE RECEIVED**

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER ED001961
2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S). N.A.
3. IDENTIFICATION NO. N.A.

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE YES ☒ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT GRANTED YES ☒ NO ☐

COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED YES ☒ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT
- PROPOSAL ☐
- IN-PROGRESS ☐
- FINAL ☒
- FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

4. AUTHOR(S): Dodson, Dan W.

5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Crisis in the Public Schools: Racial Segregation Northern Style

6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.

7. EDITOR(S): N.A.

8. PLACE OF ORIGIN
ORG. Council for American Unity, 79 Madison
ST. Avenue, New York,
CITY, STATE New York
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE

9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE Council for American Unity, 79 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

10. VOL. N.A.
11. PAGES N.A.
12. MO./YR. Feb. 1965
13. TOTAL PP. 63

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR Report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

	racial imbalance	community role	
de facto segregation	public policy	majority attitude	segregation
New Rochelle, New York	Taylor vs. Board of Education Case		racial factors
Mount Vernon, New York	school officials	minority attitude	Negro-white relations

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

Reports on efforts to end de facto segregation in New Rochelle and Mount Vernon, New York, are presented. "New Rochelle, New York" by John Kaplan gives the background material on the crisis in New Rochelle. "Racial Imbalance in Public Education in New Rochelle" by Dan W. Dodson, discusses the public policy issues confronting the New Rochelle Board of Education. "The New Rochelle Decision" by Judge Irving R. Kaufman, gives the judge's decision in the Taylor versus the Board of Education case. "The Leadership Role of School Officials in Integration" by Florence D. Sheeley, president of the New Rochelle P.T.A., discusses the attitudes and role of the community.

"Racial Factors in Public Elementary Education, Mount Vernon, New York" by Don W. Dodson, discusses the problem of segregation caused by the division in the town made by the railroad. "The Report of the Citizen's Committee on Racial Imbalance to the Mount Vernon Board of Education" highlights the recommendations of the committee. "The Minority Report of the Citizen's Committee on Racial Imbalance to the Mount Vernon Board of Education" discusses a different view of the problem and some approaches to its solution.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION

20. DIVISION OR DEPT.

21. CONTRACT NO.

PROJECT NO.

22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT

23. DURATION OR PROJECT

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Office of Education

2

ED001961

Crisis in the Public Schools

•

RACIAL SEGREGATION
Northern Style

Based on Reports

by

DAN W. DODSON

Office of Education-EEOP
Research and Materials Branch

COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN UNITY
79 Madison Avenue • New York, N. Y.

REPRINTED BY PERMISSION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN PRINTED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN UNITY

Board of Directors

DAN W. DODSON
Chairman

CHARLES ALTMAN
GARDA W. BOWMAN

EARLE D. MARKS
President

BENJAMIN FINE
ALONZO F. MYERS

JACKIE ROBINSON

Editorial Board

DAN W. DODSON, Chairman
Center for Human Relations
and Community Studies,
New York University

MARIE BARRY
U.S. Office of Education,
Washington, D.C.

GARDA W. BOWMAN
Community Councils,
State Commission Against
Discrimination, New York

BENJAMIN FINE
Educational Editor,
North American Newspaper Alliance

HULDAH FINE
District Administrator, Detroit Public
Schools, Detroit, Michigan

LUCILE GUSTAFSON
Akron, Ohio Public Schools

L. D. HASKEW
Dean of the College of Education,
University of Texas, Austin

B. M. HINDMAN
Professor of Education,
University of Miami, Coral Gables, Fla.

ALEX H. LAZES
School Civic Clubs,
New York City Public Schools

FREDERICK HOWELL LEWIS
Director, Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund,
New York

SIDNEY MARLAND
Superintendent of Schools,
Winnetka, Illinois

ALONZO F. MYERS
Professor Emeritus,
Department of Higher Education
New York University

ELINOR PANCOAST
Department of Sociology,
Goucher College, Baltimore, Md.

SADIE DANIEL ST. CLAIR
Professor of Social Science,
Public Schools, Washington, D.C.

ANNABEL C. PRESCOTT
Board of Education, Chicago, Ill.

FANNIE R. SHAFTEL
Associate Professor of Education,
Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.

MATTHEW J. WHITEHEAD
Dean of Graduate Instruction,
District of Columbia Teachers College,
Washington, D.C.

(c. 1)

Crisis in the Public Schools

•

RACIAL SEGREGATION
Northern Style

CONFRONTATIONS
AT
NEW ROCHELLE
AND
MOUNT VERNON
NEW YORK

Based on Reports
by
DAN W. DODSON

Office of Education-EEOP
Research and Materials Branch

COUNCIL FOR AMERICAN UNITY
79 Madison Avenue • New York, N. Y.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction — Marie Barry 3

II. Prologue — Dan W. Dodson 4

III. New Rochelle

Time Table of Events 6

The Kaplan Report 7

The Dodson Report 14

The Kaufman Decision 23

The Shelley Report 30

IV. Mount Vernon

Time Table of Events 36

The Dodson Report 37

The Citizens Committee Report 54

The Ragno Minority Report 59

V. Epilogue — Dan W. Dodson 62

Introduction

IT HAS BEEN deeply gratifying to work with Mr. Earle D. Marks, President of the Council for American Unity, in compiling and editing the reports growing out of efforts to end de facto segregation in New Rochelle and Mount Vernon. His intention in publishing these documents is to contribute to the wide public now concerned with this process—members of boards of education, school teachers and administrators, members of parents' and taxpayers' groups—some insights that may prove valuable in similar confrontations.

Dr. Dan W. Dodson, as Director of the Center for Human Relations and Community Studies at New York University, has played a key role in both these emotion-laden encounters—as philosopher, social scientist, plain citizen. In his report to the Board of Education of New Rochelle, he and his staff defined a new role for all boards of education as a body no longer concerned only with the purse strings of the community, but with its conscience as well. In his report to the Board of Education of Mount Vernon, he amplified this theme to suggest the "sins" of the community in rejecting such devices as busing or open enrollment. The other documents included here suggest the range of reaction to one of the dilemmas of our time, centered around such a philosophy and the use of such devices.

Such sections of these statements as those presenting detailed descriptions of local statistics and logistics have been deleted. Effort has been made to preserve the evidence of "process"—the soul-searching, the honest but frequently painful differences of opinion, the threads of decision-making which may lead, as in the case of New Rochelle, to a basic resolution of the differences between Negro and white in the conduct of public school policy. It is my hope that what here unfolds will be as vivid and as valuable to our readers as it has been to me in the preparation.

MARIE BARRY, Ph. D.

New York City, N. Y.
February 1965

Prologue

NEXT TO WORLD PEACE, the restructuring of race relations is the greatest challenge to social engineering in our time. The revolution in agriculture has required the migration of millions of marginal laborers to the cities throughout the country. The Negro is a visible part of that transmutation from farm to city. The trauma of segregation and debasement of the human being, hidden on the plantation, has suddenly moved to the main street of the metropolis. Here, where there are sufficient numbers of well-educated spokesmen for his cause—both laymen and professionals—his protests against discrimination are being heard. New York State, for instance, has had more de facto segregation cases in the courts than any other in the country.

The school system bears the brunt of frustrations and demands stemming from the pressures of social change. Like all other groups, the Negro sees education as a ladder by which to attain upward mobility and social acceptance. Understandably, his impatience grows when he sees his child fail because the public school does not provide him with the *opportunity* to learn. It is logical and natural that racial segregation stands as a symbol of inferior education. Experience with "separate but equal" has convinced the entire nation that "separate"—whether de facto or de jure—can never be "equal."

As the Negro moved from the inner city to suburban neighborhoods, the dialogue began. And it will continue as the need to reconcile the inequities of racial imbalance become more apparent. We have only begun to face the realities of de facto racial segregation in the North.

Foremost in this confrontation was the city of New Rochelle in 1957. Mount Vernon serves as a more recent example of a community's effort to surmount the barriers of discrimination created by de facto segregation in the public schools. If these two cases provide some guide lines for other communities as they consider this problem, this publication will have served its purpose.

The material is organized around the reports that bear my name, but it is only fitting that credit also be given to the team which assisted me in New Rochelle. They were Arno Bellack and Edmund Reutter of Teachers College, Columbia University and Roscoe Brown and Herbert Bruner of New York University.

One confesses extreme humility in his role of adviser to communities trying to think through their problems. One wishes he could save them litigation and tension. But experience teaches that this is apparently an inevitable part of the process. One can only hope that the skills of human relations will eventually become so refined that change may be affected without such conflicts. However, we have found that few vested interests will surrender their privileges without resistance. One cannot have freedom without differences. One cannot always have differences without their polarizing in conflict. But healthy conflict is the hallmark of a free society.

It is at these points that new designs are being forged. It is from these designs that the New America will be cast from what began as the Revolution of 1776. To be part of it fills one with a sense of history and will, hopefully, elicit from us all efforts commensurate with the challenge.

DAN W. DODSON, Ph. D.

Time Table of Events

1930—The gerrymandering of school districts to send white children out of the Lincoln school district to the Webster and Mayflower schools.

1949—Transfers from the Lincoln district forbidden. Meanwhile, the white children had transferred to other schools.

1957—The proposal to rebuild obsolete Lincoln school on the same site was defeated because the size of the total amount of money requested and a dispute over the location of the new high school.

December — The Dodson report.

1960—The Board proposed a referendum to rebuild on the same site; before the Board's proposition could be placed on the ballot, a number of Lincoln parents brought action before the New York Commissioner of Education to restrain the Board from attempting to rebuild and to require it to take steps to end the racial imbalance there.

The Commissioner ruled against the parents' request.

A proposition to rebuild the Lincoln school was passed. Every zone but Lincoln supported the propositions to rebuild.

Oct. 21 — Lawyer Paul Zuber filed a complaint for the Negro parents.

Oct. 27 — Murray Fuerst, corporation counsel and attorney for the Board of Education, asked the court not to grant a preliminary injunction.

Nov. 22 — The hearing began.

1961—Jan. 24 — Judge Kaufman handed down his decision against the Board of Education. The Board protested to the Court of Appeals, which ruled the action premature. Later the Board submitted a plan for open enrollment.

May 10 — Judge Kaufman held the hearing on the plan.

May 12 — Judge Kaufman requested a Department of Justice brief; two weeks later a brief was received from the Department of Justice attacking the Board's plan.

May 31 — Judge Kaufman handed down his final order on the desegregation of Lincoln he decreed a completely free transfer for all Lincoln students, subject only to their being enough room in the receiving schools.

June 14 — The discrepancy in the Board's statistics on the number of enrollments open was protested, the later statistics denoting fewer openings in the "white" schools than previously indicated.

June 19 — Zuber filed a complaint regarding these statistics.

July 19 — The Board's appeal of Judge Kaufman's original decision was argued before three judges of the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

Aug. 2 — The Court affirmed the District Court decison by two to one.

Aug. 4 — Board Chairman Merryle S. Rukeyser and the majority of the Board voted to seek a review in the Supreme Court.

Sept. 7 — School opened and 267 Lincoln school children were absorbed into 11 other schools.

Oct. 26 -- The Board filed in U.S. Supreme Court.

Dec. 11 — The Supreme Court denied the request for review.

1963—Sept. — The Lincoln school was closed.

New Rochelle, New York

by John Kaplan*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Kaplan's report was primarily concerned with the litigation between the Negro parents and the Board of Education of the city of New Rochelle. For our present purposes, however, we believe that the time table of events will suffice to highlight the intricacies of those procedures. For us, the importance of the Kaplan report lies in his description of the events leading up to the complaint by the Negro parents, his conclusions drawn a year after the desegregation plan had been put into effect, and the questions he raises about community relations.

MORE school "desegregation" cases are pending in the State of New York today than in any other State in the Union. In each of these disputes, as well as in many others throughout the North, a powerful argument for settling out of court has been the cry, "We don't want to become another New Rochelle."

New Rochelle is important not only because it became the "Little Rock of the North," but because its case presented in microcosm so many of the vital moral, constitutional, and educational questions facing the United States today. Since this case has been so widely misunderstood both as to its facts and the law it laid down, this report will concentrate primarily upon the litigation itself. By doing this, it is not implied that the events leading up to the Federal court action or its aftermath are of less importance. In fact, a strong argument can be made for the proposition that the really important questions about the *New Rochelle* case are, first, how did community relations in a liberal northern community break down so completely that this dispute had to be resolved in the courts; and second, how is New Rochelle attempting to pick up the pieces left after the community has been badly split, after its educational system has been severely strained, and after the large majority of its citizens has been completely routed in a series of battles with a much smaller group.

History

New Rochelle, in southeastern Westchester County, is a long thin suburb of New York City, separated from that city only by a narrow strip of the Pelhams on the very south. It runs northward into central Westchester County, extending like a wedge into Scarsdale on the north. Its population as of the 1960 census was about 77,000, of whom approximately 14 percent were Negro, 45 percent were Catholic and 30 percent were Jewish. The Negro population of New Rochelle is primarily located in the center of the city, while the south-west is predominantly Italian and the north overwhelmingly Jewish.

This clumping of ethnic groups has never caused any problem in either the senior or junior high schools. New Rochelle has a single comprehensive senior high school serving the whole city, and two junior high schools, each of which also has a heterogeneous population, reasonably representative of the entire community. In the elementary schools, however, there was at the time of the litigation a much more serious problem. Seven of these schools could be called "central schools"; three—"northern"; and two—"southern." Just two of these elementary

---

*A report to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Civil Rights U.S.A.* Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962.

NEW ROCHELLE

schools contained truly mixed student bodies reflecting the community's ratio of Italian, Irish, Jewish, Negro, and white Protestant population, but it was only the dichotomy between Negroes and whites that became relevant in the Lincoln dispute. Eight of the elementary schools are racially integrated: they contain a population in which neither whites nor nonwhites could be regarded as overwhelmingly preponderant in view of the overall community ratio. Of the remaining nonintegrated schools, only one was the focus of the New Rochelle litigation. This was the Lincoln Elementary School.

The Lincoln school was built as the Winyah Avenue School in 1898 to serve an all-white, "silk stocking" neighborhood in the northern part of the town. After 1898, areas farther and farther north of the school became more heavily settled, with the effect of moving the center of town nearer the school. Meanwhile, Negroes began moving into this area, so that by 1930 the school was almost one-fourth Negro.

Sometime before 1930, the Winyah Avenue school was renamed the Lincoln school, and minor as this change is, it is in a way typical of a great part of the battle in New Rochelle. Certain of the Negro leadership has charged that this renaming was a recognition of the increasing percentage of Negroes in the school, and that it either was meant derisively or sprang from a misplaced feeling that Negroes would be proud to go to a school named after the man who freed the slaves. This charge has been attacked as irresponsible by others who assert that the school name was changed when Winyah Avenue was renamed Lincoln Avenue, apparently because of difficulty in pronouncing and spelling such an unusual name, and because Winyah Avenue, New Rochelle, was an extension of Lincoln Avenue in the nearby communities of North Pelham and Mount Vernon.

Over the years the Lincoln school became more and more heavily Negro until by 1949 it was 100 percent Negro. Then, in response to a growing number of complaints from Negro and prointegration white groups, the New Rochelle School Board took its first concrete action aimed at altering the racial imbalance in the Lincoln school. It had been noticed that white children in the Lincoln area had taken advantage of the board's transfer policy to attend other schools. It was calculated that since 106 white pupils residing in the Lincoln school zone were attending other elementary schools, and since only 200 Negro children were attending Lincoln, an integrated school, approximately two-thirds Negro, could be achieved if transfers were prohibited. Accordingly, the school board announced a rigid zoning policy whereby transfers out of the zone of residence were in effect prohibited. Few of the area's white students, however, returned to Lincoln. They either entered parochial and other private schools, or moved out of the Lincoln district within a year or two. Thus, by 1960, the student body of Lincoln school was approximately 94 percent Negro, and although no one can state precisely the racial composition of the Lincoln zone itself, most observers state that, since the restriction on transfers, the population of the area has become more heavily Negro.

Proposal to Rebuild Lincoln

Although there had been numerous complaints about the Lincoln problem, no general community attention was focused on it until the school board proposed in 1957 to rebuild the by then obsolete Lincoln on the same site. This proposal was submitted to the voters, along with many other requests for school funds, and together with most of the other proposals, it was soundly defeated. It was generally believed in the community that the Lincoln issue was not a major reason for the defeat suffered by the board, the main cause being the size of the total amount requested and a dispute over the location of the proposed new high school. Nevertheless, both the NAACP and the Urban League had opposed the rebuilding of Lincoln school, and it was generally felt that the problem of racial imbalance in Lincoln was a contributing reason for the rejection of the board's bond proposals.

During and after the 1957 referendum campaign as a result of the attention focused on the Lincoln school, the board undertook to have a number of studies of the problem made. The most comprehensive was the Dodson report, prepared by a distinguished team of educators headed by Prof. Dan W. Dodson, director of the Center for Human Relations and Community Studies at New York University. The then superintendent of schools of New Rochelle, Dr. Herbert C. Clish, now dean of the School of Education at St. John's University in New York, also prepared a number of reports, and interested citizens and groups submitted and debated their own solutions. Meanwhile, the Lincoln school was growing steadily more antiquated, and in 1960 the board of education, over the vigorous dissent of two of its members, proposed a referendum to rebuild it on the same site. Before this decision was made, three of the many proposals which had been put forth had received support from factions on the board. These were (1) the closing of the Lincoln school and the distribution of its students by rezoning of nearby school districts; (2) the building of a k-3 kindergarten through third grade) school on the site of the Lincoln to provide a neighborhood school for the kindergarten and the first three grades while allowing the top three grades to be distributed to the surrounding schools; and (3) the rebuilding of the Lincoln school on the same site. At the board meeting called to dispose of the problem, it became obvious after a short discussion that the first course of action would not be approved, since only two of the nine board members supported it. The second was defeated by a 5-4 vote, with the two members who supported the closing of Lincoln school joining two others. The five-member majority who voted against the first two plans felt that the only course open to the school board was to ask the voters to approve a bond issue to replace Lincoln with a school of the same size, on the same site. At this point, one of the minority members suggested a compromise whereby the new school would be built to house 400 pupils, 100 less than its actual enrollment of 500. These 100 pupils would then be distributed to other schools, thus allowing one-fifth of the Lincoln student body to attend schools that were not racially unbalanced. The remainder of the students in the zone would attend the new Lincoln school and wait either for a change in the neighborhood or for their entrance into junior high school before they would attend a racially balanced school. After some discussion the majority agreed to this compromise, and it was passed by a 7-2 vote.

Parents' Order to Restrain

Before the board's proposition could be placed on the ballot, however, a number of Lincoln parents brought an action before the New York Commissioner of Education to restrain the school board from attempting to rebuild the Lincoln school and to require it to take steps to end the racial imbalance there. The commissioner ruled against their contentions on the ground that the decision of the board did not appear discriminatory on its face and was within the general jurisdiction of a board of education to decide questions of site selection, zoning, and construction of schools.

The proposition to rebuild the Lincoln school was then placed on the ballot by the board of education, and after a vigorous campaign during which reams of literature were produced by all sides, the bond issue carried by a 3-to-1 majority. Amidst the general rejoicing and relief in the community that the Lincoln issue had finally been solved, one fact escaped general notice. While every other zone had supported the proposition to rebuild the Lincoln school, the residents of the Lincoln area had voted against it.

Nonetheless, at this point the school board felt that the controversy was in great part over; that the unhealthy split in the community was well on its way to being repaired; that the rebuilding of the Lincoln school could begin; and that the racial imbalance in the Lincoln school was to be with the community for the foreseeable future. The board reckoned, however, without Paul Zuber.

Litigation Begins

Despite the widespread belief in the community that Mr. Zuber was one of a number of professional agitators who solicited the legal business from a group of local Negroes and then financed and directed the litigation, the truth appears to be that the plaintiffs who had lost their case before the New York Commissioner of Education had decided not to give up the battle, and approached Paul Zuber at his home in Croton-on-Hudson. Mr. Zuber, a 35-year-old Negro lawyer, was just beginning to made a reputation as a successful advocate in this type of suit. He had recently won the famous *Skipwith** case in New York City, wherein the court held that no Negro child could be compelled to attend an overwhelmingly Negro school where such schools were demonstrably inferior. Mr. Zuber advised the New Rochelle group to follow the tactics that he had successfully employed in *Skipwith:* they were to withdraw their children from the Lincoln school and attempt to register them at other public schools. This would, Mr. Zuber felt, not only garner a great deal of publicity, but would also create a favorable climate of opinion for the litigation which was to follow. The parents followed Mr. Zuber's program and received even more publicity than anticipated when the New Rochelle authorities prosecuted them for truancy and for loitering near a school. Then Mr. Zuber commenced the Federal court litigation.

In Retrospect

It has been a full school year since the desegregation plan was put into effect, and it is appropriate to ask, How did it work? First of all, many of the problems which had been predicted did not materialize. There was no administrative chaos. Lincoln did not become more racially imbalanced; rather, since most of the white children chose not to transfer, the percentage of Negroes in Lincoln dropped from 94 to 88. Moreover, although New Rochelle is extremely school conscious—over half of the ads to sell houses specify school district—the presence of Lincoln children in the other schools does not appear to have had any effect on nearby real estate values. Nor were transferring Lincoln students greeted with hostility or treated as those who had unfairly won a special privilege; on the contrary, they were received warmly, and every effort was made by both teachers and students to bring them into the life of their new schools.

It is too early to estimate the full effects of the free-transfer provision on more subtle issues, such as the educational development of New Rochelle's children, both Negro and white.* Nonetheless, a number of observations can be made. Some Lincoln children transferring to schools nearby were stimulated by their new environment. There were those who had always been reluctant to go to the Lincoln school, but who, once admitted to other schools, changed their attitude toward school completely. They experienced an increase in motivation and interest which was reflected in their school work. Other students showed improvement in attitude and discipline, but showed no gain in academic performance. A number of teachers have observed, however, that there is often a timelag before an improvement in attitude affects school work.

**In the Matter of Skipwith,* 180 N.Y.S. 2d 852 (Dom. Rel. Ct. N.Y.C. 1958), 4 *Race Rel. L. Rep.* 264 (1959). The issue arose in a domestic relations court proceeding brought by the board of education to declare Negro parents guilty of neglect because they had withdrawn their children from the school system in protest against allegedly inferior schools. The court not only refused to find the parents guilty of neglect, but held that they had a right to refuse to obey the New York compulsory education law because the racially unbalanced schools to which they had been assigned had been allowed by the city to become inferior.

In the schools serving socio-economic groups far higher than Lincoln's, however, the success of the transfer plan is by no means clear. The problems in the Roosevelt school, which received the largest numbers of transferees, are a subject of dispute in New Rochelle. Much of the argument centers on the personality and policies of Dr. Barbara Mason, the principal of Roosevelt school. The supporters of Dr. Mason contend that the following comparisons aside from race are a measure of the problems encountered. The average income of the Roosevelt families was approximately $25,000, while that of the transferees was about $4,000. In the great majority of the Roosevelt families both parents were college educated, while high school graduates were rare among the parents of the Lincoln children. The Roosevelt children came from stable homes where divorce was rare, while some 50 percent of the transferees had no male parent living at home. Lastly, while the median IQ of the Roosevelt children was approximately 125, that of their classmates from Lincoln was below 100.

The Negro leadership of New Rochelle takes issue with these comparisons. They admit that there is a difference between the Roosevelt and the Lincoln children, but say that this difference has been grossly magnified. The Lincoln children may be deprived, they admit, but the children are not *that* deprived. They charge that in the previous comparison the income of the Roosevelt parents has been overestimated by one-third and that of the Lincoln parents has been underestimated by one-fourth. They assert that the majority of Lincoln parents are high school graduates, and while these critics are vague on the percentage of fatherless children, they assert that it is nowhere near 50 percent. Lastly, they point out that IQ tests are known to discriminate against lower income children by reflecting cultural environment as much as ability.

Cultural Gap

Although the cause and size are in dispute, the existence of a gap between the performance of the Roosevelt and Lincoln pupils is clear. This gap could not be closed in 1 year. During the trial, Dr. Mason had been quoted as saying that, although there were Negro children in New Rochelle capable of holding their own at Roosevelt in general they were not from the Lincoln area. Nonetheless, the teachers in Roosevelt exerted themselves to close the gap. They often gave up their lunch hours and stayed after school to provide special help for the Lincoln children and went to great trouble to meet with parents. Yet often this was not enough, and some of the transferees, instead of being stimulated by the educational aspirations of the Roosevelt children, seemed to give up trying at all. In one grade, the average tested achievement of the transferees did not rise during the school year, despite the essentially private tutoring many of them had received from their teachers.

---

*Many people have asked other questions which also deserve answer. "What was accomplished in New Rochelle that could not have been accomplished without bitterness, disruption of the community, and harm to children?" Other people have questioned, "Where was the elected leadership of New Rochelle, or most of the religious leaders of all faiths, during the debacle?"

Probably the most unfortunate aspect of the Lincoln influx at Roosevelt has been its creation of racial stereotypes in the minds of Roosevelt children. The record for the year shows that in a number of classes, no white child performed as poorly as the best of the Negro children did, and 89 percent of the Lincoln children finished the year in the lowest quarter of their respective classes. Mr. Mason's supporters say that the most unfortunate result of the poor showing of Lincoln transferees in Roosevelt is the creation of racial stereotypes in the minds of Roosevelt pupils. They claim that white children from a liberal background who had no contact with Negroes before but whose home and school life taught ideals of brotherhood and the equality of man were thrown together with children of a far lower socio economic and cultural level who happened to be Negroes. One teacher said, "Some of the Roosevelt children actually understand that this is a cultural and not a racial difference, but all they see is that the Negro children are not as bright, clean, honest, or well behaved as they."

The Negro leadership of New Rochelle, while unable to disagree with the statistical data on the performance of the transferees at Roosevelt, takes issue with almost all of the other statements by the supporters of Dr. Mason. They charge that a major reason for the poor performance of the Negro children at Roosevelt was that by a subtle combination of slights and patronizing behavior Dr. Mason made them feel unwelcome. It is difficult to resolve this type of controversy since the evidence is ambiguous. It may be noted, however, that in the Ward school where the problems of assimilating the transferees were conceded to have been well handled by the principal, Lee Kahan, the academic performance of the Lincoln transferees does not appear to have been significantly better than that of the transferees in Roosevelt.

Both sides to the Roosevelt controversy agree, however, that the picture of disaster at Roosevelt does not tell the whole story. In general, students who had been behavior problems at Lincoln improved in deportment at Roosevelt,* and teachers report that the motivation of many transferees seemed higher. One transferee finished in the upper half of the class, and in a number of individual cases the special efforts of the teaching staff produced notable improvement. Moreover, considering the time and effort spent by the teachers on the transferee, little, if any, harm seems to have been done to the educational progress of the Roosevelt children. Even though teachers had less time for them, they progressed as rapidly as in previous years.

Problems in Prospect—1962

A great many other problems still face New Rochelle. First, and dwarfing all others, is the question of what should be done with the Lincoln school. Many of the opponents of the school board have alleged that, to embarrass the Lincoln transferees, the board has poured in unprecedented amounts of money and effort into Lincoln to improve the education of those who stayed there. It is true that education at Lincoln has continued its steady improvement. But according to Dr. Joseph P. Robitaille, the principal of Lincoln, no special efforts were made this year. He said:

> The Lincoln school has been receiving a little bit more help each year, and this trend continued last year. We were helped by a slightly lower class size, but no exceptionally large amount of aid was provided the school, even on

*This apparently was due to a number of effects, not the least of which was the feeling that, having been placed in an integrated atmosphere, they had to live up as best they could to what was expected of them. Moreover, children who were discipline problems before were distributed throughout the school.

> a per-pupil basis. It's strange that people should argue that education in Lincoln was too good. We've done our best, and it would seem pretty foolish to ask that we do less than that.

Nonetheless, the parents who kept their children at Lincoln have not taken the easy way out. They have been called Uncle Toms and Aunt Jemimas for allowing their children to remain at Lincoln. Now they seem passionately attached to the school. On the other hand, with the much smaller student body the fixed costs per pupil in Lincoln have gone up. Moreover, the school is getting older, so that in the near future the board will have to decide whether to replace it or close it down and transfer the pupils to other schools.

The Negro leadership of New Rochelle demands that the school be abandoned; they call it a symbol of segregation and claim that even though its patrons may not realize it, Lincoln is a segregated school, providing an inferior education which should not be tolerated in New Rochelle. On the other hand Lincoln school parents argue that they should not be denied a neighborhood school because of their race; that this would be a violation of their constitutional rights. Many observers have expressed the fear that in 10 years New Rochelle may have at least two schools as racially imbalanced as Lincoln is now. And, of course, this time interval might be reduced if the Lincoln school is closed and its present pupils distributed.

One other problem concerns New Rochelle more than its importance deserves. The private busing of the Lincoln children is expensive. There are those who argue that the Lincoln parents, by making sacrifices for their children's education, will appreciate its importance and encourage their children to do their best at school. Nonetheless, the transportation expense has placed a financial strain on those least able to afford it. Although contributions have been solicited in the community at large and about $15,000 has been raised, the cost of busing is a continuing financial burden on parents and others. Fortunately, New York State law has been changed so that it will no longer be prohibitively expensive for the school board to bus children at public expense. After 2 years, the State will pay 90 percent of the cost. Although the local school budget would have to carry more of the cost during the first 2 years,* and State law still requires that parochial and other private school children receive the same transportation as public school children, busing the Lincoln children at public expense will no longer be financially prohibitive.

Despite the problems, most residents of New Rochelle are hopeful. However, they talk little in public about these school issues. Everyone seems to feel that these troubles can be handled quietly without generating more unfavorable publicity for the city.

The great majority of school board members who actively took sides in the Lincoln dispute are no longer serving, and most of the bitter antagonists on both sides have withdrawn from all controversy. Moreover, New Rochelle now has a new superintendent of schools, Dr. David G. Salten, a vigorous, nationally respected educator who enjoys the confidence of all factions. Dr. Salten, fortunately, has had 5 years of experience with experiments in elementary school reorganization. He is not committed to the traditional k-6 neighborhood school, which has come under increasing attack from some educators as being expensive, inefficient, and productive of segregation. It appears that New Rochelle's hope for the future may lie in community acceptance of Dr. Salten's educational ideas and leadership.

New Rochelle, like other cities, will continue to have school problems. But most people in New Rochelle have confidence that solutions and compromises can be found. "The most important thing," they all say, "is to stay out of court."

---

*During which the State will provide 30 percent and 60 percent, respectively, of the funds.

Racial Imbalance in Public Education in New Rochelle

by Dan W. Dodson*

EDITOR'S NOTE: The section of the Dodson report which follows is that most frequently referred to in the many comments upon it since its release. The intricacies of the budgeting, zoning, etc., which appeared to us to have essentially local interest, have been eliminated.

Nor have we included the section which contained one important question quoted by Judge Kaufman in his decision, since we believe this stands alone. This is the question as Dodson stated it: "If the Board of Education in the past, operating in a different social setting, encouraged or permitted the present situation to develop, does the present Board of Education have the obligation to undo any damages which may have accrued under previous decisions of its predecessors? Does the present Board have an obligation to eradicate the imbalance of races in the Lincoln school which was permitted to develop under previous Boards?"

THE PUBLIC POLICY issues confronting the New Rochelle Board of Education are exceedingly complex. This is due partly to the fact that they are broader and more fundamental issues. Partly, too, it is due to the fact that there is no "evidence" that can be brought to bear other than the evidence of conscience. That is to say "research" will not give leads or answers to the public policy questions, to the same extent it may to the kinds of questions raised in the other policy areas.

Public policy is, in essence, the heart of government—school government as well as general government. Also, in the phase of public policy at issue in New Rochelle, the refuge of the law is not available in the more fundamental aspects. The law, as it exists at the end of 1957, does not answer the question: Should a public agency consider race, creed or color in carrying out its general responsibilities? The law does, of course, prevent assignment of pupils to schools solely on the basis of color. Such direct assignment, however, is not a policy which has been advocated by any responsible spokesman in New Rochelle, and, therefore, little assistance in the resolution of the Board of Education's problem is found there. Clearly at the moment the law does not require the Board of Education of New Rochelle to do anything at all about the de facto segregation in the Lincoln School. That is to say, the law does not require that there be a "balance" or even a "mixing" of different races in all public schools. The question is whether a school board can legally assign pupils to schools for the purpose of achieving integration when the segregation is not based solely on color has not been ruled on by the courts. If a school board chose, however, as a matter of policy, to zone its schools so as to achieve a greater balance, it would appear to be on rather firm ground, particularly so if the adminstration of the policy did not disadvantage large numbers to advantage a few.

Unfortunately, the dissenting opinion of Justice Harlan in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case in 1896, in which he indicated that he believed the Constitution to be "colorblind", has been used to justify two diametrically opposed concepts in public policy. It has been used as an argument against discrimination on a basis of race. Also, however, it has been used as a justification for a "do nothing" policy by those who wish to preserve types of discriminatory practices based on race which do exist and will continue to exist unless government makes available to the minority groups opportunities to move out of their minority group situations. This consideration becomes extremely pertinent in regard to public policy concerning schools. Public schools were founded and have as their primary historical and legal purpose the training of citizens capable of effectively participating in governing themselves and devoted to our form of government. It is basically through the mechanism of the public school that members of a group occupying an inferior position in our society can achieve equal opportunities. Help in breaking down economic, social and cultural barriers should begin with the public schools. This view is entirely consistent with the role the public schools were instituted to serve in our democracy and which in general they have served well.

---

*The Center for Human Relations and Community Studies, New York: New York University, 1957.

The argument about whether government should look at color is not one which can be answered simply "yes" or "no". Government must look at color in some instances for the general public welfare, and in others it must not. To ignore considerations special to one race, creed or color would be unintelligent (and often actually impossible despite protestations that it is being done). Obviously the Board of Education of New Rochelle is concerned about color of citizens and public policy in relation to it. Otherwise they would not have given the many hours to consideration of the problem which is now being investigated by this team. Indeed the very fact that the team was hired would indicate that the Board members are indeed anxious to resolve the problem of racial imbalance as a matter of public policy.

The fact that the present Board of Education and administration in New Rochelle did not create the situation which has led to the racial imbalance, cannot in good conscience be offered as a basis for saying that they have no responsibility for it. Changes in the district lines, changes in the districting policy, and more concentrated effort to enlist other public officials in attacking the problem might well have eliminated it or reduced its complexity before it reached the proportions it has reached today.

Also it cannot be said that the Board of Education must concern itself completely with educational issues as distinguished from broad public policy issues which affect the quality of education. While technically the Board of Education has a narrow charge, the function that they are called upon to administer, in the words of the United States Supreme Court, is "perhaps the most important function of state and local governments... Today [1954] it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment. In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms."

While the present situation in the Lincoln district can be defended on the grounds that it is equal education provided on equal terms, the persistent question arises: Is the present zoning of the Lincoln school a case of governmental force leading to racial segregation? Legally, as mentioned before, this type of question has not yet been adjudicated. It seems clear, however, that the children living in the Lincoln School district are not getting the kinds of advantages which would help them to adjust to life in the community of New Rochelle and to help them make their maximum contributions in that community. It seems that morally the situation is little different than the situation which the United States Supreme Court in 1954 found to generate "a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."

The Board of Education cannot turn the clock back to the time that the zoning boundaries now in effect were adopted. It is faced with a de facto problem which must be worked out in the present context of fact and knowledge. The United States Supreme Court, after reviewing extensive materials on sociology and psychology, and after hearing arguments by the most able counsel on both sides of the specific issue involved, declared: "We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." It is true that the facts before the court involved enforced segregation solely on the basis of race. Is the situation different when the enforced segregation is on the basis of a zoning policy which has the same effect? We conclude that morally the issue is essentially the same, recognizing of course, that legally it is substantially different at the moment.

If the Board of Education has any responsibilities to do more than see that basic courses are taught in the school (and we are sure that the Board well recognizes that it has such) the responsibility for exercising leadership in the field of education broadly conceived would seem to be a paramount one. We believed the Board should take the initiative in bringing together other governmental agencies and interested community groups in an attack on the basic problem of race relations in New Rochelle of which the racial imbalance in the schools is only one aspect. This implies that the Board of Education also would take into account community concerns such as changing the character of neighborhoods, declining property values and the like. To say that the Board has not already taken these things into account would be untrue. To say that it should not would be at best, naive.

The present situation in New Rochelle facing the Board of Education is unusual in another fundamental respect. It is that the Board of Education is not being asked to make changes where changes are not needed. Changes have to be made. Enrollments are increasing. Some buildings are old. New facilities have to be constructed. It is a time of change in New Rochelle. The question really is: Should the changes now necessary (which will effect the future of New Rochelle, not only as a school district, but as a community for many years to come) be made on a basis which will preserve the status quo or should the Board seize the opportunity which is presented to it to exercise real leadership in the greatest problem facing American democracy today, namely race relations. The Board must realize that any building or utilization plan it adopts will implicitly make this decision. It is not possible to avoid the question of whether racial imbalance is going to be alleviated or encouraged. To do nothing about it is to encourage racial imbalance. To do nothing about it is a decision just as powerful and as important as a decision to try to do something about the imbalance.

At this time the Board of Education is in a position to eliminate de facto segregation in schools by its decision on a matter which has to be resolved—namely how to accommodate the increasing numbers of students in the public schools of New Rochelle. Obviously the racial imbalance in the school is related to the housing patterns. The housing patterns, however, cannot be changed overnight. The school district boundaries can. We must hasten to add at this point, however, that simply mixing the children in school will be only a superficial approach to the problem, and perhaps an unfortunate one if it is not accompanied by other actions on other fronts. These aspects are discussed elsewhere in the report.

Certainly the Board of Education will want to be influenced by public opinion. It behooves the Board, however, to make sure that it has an accurate measure of that public opinion—not one clouded by self-appointed spokesmen for various ill-defined groups. If the opinion is not clear-cut—and to say that such is the case in New Rochelle is to understate the situation—means that the Board must decide either: (1) to do nothing until the public reaches substantial consensus, obviously far off in time; or (2) as nine people appointed to be responsible trustees for the education of children in New Rochelle, to weigh the evidence and make a decision based on that evidence and their own consciences.

While it is clear that the problem facing the Board of New Rochelle is in many respects unique the action of the Board in this matter could have profound influence throughout the rest of the country. Whatever is done now will have to be periodically reassessed in terms of experience. Undoubtedly whatever is done now will not in and of itself eliminate future problems. It seems clear, however, that lack of carefully formulated policy now by the Board of Education will, at best, postpone the crisis and, at worst, aggravate it. New Rochelle has always enjoyed a very high reputation as a school system and as a community. It has been a pioneer, not a follower. It is unthinkable that now it would want to reverse its role when perhaps it can pioneer in an area more significant than those of its previous achievements, namely the area of bringing about better inter-group relations for the mutual welfare of all groups. Clearly an experimental attitude is needed. More experimentation than has been apparent to this panel is required, if the ever-increasing challenge of good race relations is to be met.

Educational Issues

The educational issues relevant to the problem of racial imbalance in the public schools of New Rochelle grow out of the basic public policy questions discussed in the preceding section. Under what conditions can the public schools best make available to all children and youth educational opportunities on equal terms? More specifically, to what extent and in what ways is the quality of education in a public school affected by the composition of the student body along lines of race or color?

Two lines of inquiry must be pursued briefly in dealing with these issues. First, what functions do the American people expect their public schools to perform? Second, what bearing does the racial and socio-economic composition of the student body have on the ability of the public schools in a given community to discharge these functions successfully?

Schools are built and maintained to provide opportunities for *all* children and youth to develop the skills, attitudes and knowledge that will enable them to participate fully in American life. The Supreme Court in its 1954 decision described the responsibilities of education and its importance to our democratic society in these words: "It is the very foundation of good citizenship. Today it is a principal instrument in awakening the child to cultural values, in preparing him for later professional training, and in helping him to adjust normally to his environment."

Education today is one of our nation's most vital concerns from two related viewpoints—from the viewpoint of the welfare of the democratic society that supports the schools and from the viewpoint of the personal development of students who attend the schools. These are complementary considerations and must therefore be discussed in close relationship to each other.

Welfare of Society. Schooling is an integral part of the process of socialization by which the young grow into active membership and participation in the way of life—the culture—of their society. Our culture is composed of many facets—values, traditions, institutions, arts, sciences, and common sense ways of thinking and doing things that are part and parcel of the shared life of our people.

The problem facing the schools is to seek methods for putting students in touch with the resources of their culture in such fashion that they learn to utilize these resources creatively and purposefully in dealing with problems of living at home, at work and in the community. Each generation builds on our heritage and adds to it by its own unique experience as new discoveries are made and as adaptations to changing conditions become necessary.

In the context of the problem before us the reference to "cultural values" is of special significance. At the very core of our culture lie certain key values that have the sanction of our history and represent our basic commitments as a people. The belief that human life and well-being are to be valued above all else and the conviction that every individual regardless of race, creed or color is worthy of respect and should be afforded every opportunity for fullest development are the foundation on which our institutions rest. These values in essence constitute society's mandate to the schools—educators are under obligation to engender in students allegiance to these ideals and to order the life of the school in such fashion that it too becomes an embodiment of these values. Thus the public schools of New Rochelle must find in the democratic ideals the foundation on which to build their instructional programs to the end that these values will find concrete expression in their students as they grow toward full participation in community life.

Welfare of the Individual Student. In viewing its responsibilities to individual students the school of necessity takes its cue from the fundamental social values mentioned above. The most crucial test of the quality of a school is the extent to which it provides learning opportunities suitable for *each* child. The responsibility of New Rochelle's public schools, in the light of our basic commitment to education for *all* children and youth, is to develop instructional programs that cater to the wide range of backgrounds, abilities, interests and aptitudes represented in their students. The obligation of the professional staff is to begin with each child at his present stage of educational development and give him the opportunity to progress as far and as rapidly as his abilities and interests will carry him.

Racial Composition of Student Group and Functions of Education

What bearing does the racial composition of the student body have on the ability of a public school to discharge its responsibilities to the society that supports it and to the students who are sent to it for nurture? In our judgment, this question is directly relevant to the problem of "racial imbalance" in New Rochelle's public schools and cannot be ignored.

Welfare of Society. We have noted above that the public schools have a mandate to educate in behalf of our basic democratic tradition rooted in the conviction that all human beings are intrinsically of equal moral worth. If then our goal is to foster genuine understanding and good will among all our citizens, it is doubtful that this objective can be achieved in a community where children of different racial backgrounds have little or no opportunity for association with each other. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in American communities children of different social, racial and cultural backgrounds who live near each other should attend the same schools. Association, not segregation, must be the condition within which developing attitudes are formed and reinforced along democratic lines.

This is not to say that mere association or "mixing" will inevitably result in harmonious relations and good will. Indeed, it must be recognized that individually members of a minority group may suffer from rejection and social isolation in what is ostensibly an integrated school. Grouping practices and assignment of certain students to courses labeled "general" or "vocational" may have the effect of isolating groups of students within a school and depriving them of desirable associations with other students assigned to more favored groups and more "respectable" courses. Bringing students of different racial backgrounds together to study in the same school is therefore not sufficient. Equally important is the development of (1) patterns of human relationships that foster genuine harmony and good will and (2) grouping procedures that take due account of the interest and aptitudes of individual students but do not deprive them of fruitful and essential relationships with fellow students of different abilities and backgrounds. Without attention to these factors little is to be gained from indiscriminate mixing of students. Providing students and staff with opportunities to work together toward common goals and to share learning experiences that are personally satisfying are essential ingredients of any plan that looks toward the building of a school that gives concrete form to democratic ideals.

Welfare of Individual Students. The case for integrated schools is equally telling when considered from the viewpoint of the educational development of individual students. The Supreme Court in its 1954 decision relied on expert opinion to determine the influence of legally enforced segregation on the developing minds and personalities of Negro children. The Court was impressed by the testimony of representatives of the various social sciences to the effect that such segregation imparied the ability of Negro students to learn and denied them full opportunity for optimum educational development. Thus other factors being equal, it is difficult to defend the proposition that Negro students in an all-Negro school or in one that is almost all Negro can receive an "equal" education. Students in all-Negro schools might achieve certain goals of education (i.e. skills and knowledge) but does attendance at such schools prepare them to be fully contributing members in the communities where they live? We believe not. It seems clear that to assign children to a school whose student body is all or predominantly of one race is to establish conditions that place undue restrictions on the ability of those children to profit fully from their educational experience.

In this connection it is important to note that attendance at a racially integrated school is held to be a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for optimum educational development. That is to say, other factors must also be taken into account. To assign students to schools to achieve racial balance and not at the same time provide ample opportunities for differentiated programs to meet individual needs is to meet the problem with halfway measures. When the student body is composed of students from an increasingly wide range of family, socio-economic and neighborhood backgrounds, differences among students in such factors as previous educational experience, scholastic achievement, and motivation for school learning will naturally be increased. This imposes on the school staff responsibility to take due account of these differences in providing within the framework of the common school differentiated learning opportunities to meet individual needs.

Districting Policies

One practical educational problem that is largely administrative in nature deserves attention. Providing educational opportunities for all children on equal terms has meant in practice the establishment of neighborhood schools serving a limited geographical area. In setting up attendance districts it is considered good administrative policy to take into account such factors as these: (1) size of school building, (2) distances traveled by children, and (3) traffic hazards.

In the light of the preceding discussion, it is clear that another factor must be added: namely, zone lines should be drawn in such a way as to encourage balanced instead of imbalanced schools. This is consistent with the principle set forth above

—that in American communities children of different racial backgrounds who live near each other should attend mixed schools. It must again be pointed out that this factor should be viewed in the context of all the relevant factors that deserve consideration in establishing equitable zoning policies. It goes without saying that accessibility, for example, would be of prime importance in assigning very young children in the primary grades. For older children this factor, while still important, need not be given as much weight. In practice, this means that in order to insure a maximum degree of integration and at the same time give attention to the needs of different age groups, it will be necessary and desirable to establish primary schools in certain neighborhoods, and at the same time establish intermediate schools for older children that serve a wider geographical area.

Community Climate in Inter-group Relations

A key factor in the inter-group relations issue is the climate of community and the role of responsible individuals and agencies in its creation. Studies of school integration in Louisville, Kentucky; St. Louis, Missouri; Baltimore, Maryland; Washington, D. C.; Clinton, Tennessee; Little Rock, Arkansas; and other communities in the north and south point up the importance and the need to develop a positive climate in the community toward inter-group relations. The roles of the elected members of local government, of school officials, of religious leaders, and civic leaders in developing a positive climate cannot be overlooked. Some school systems where complete segregation was legally enforced before the Supreme Court decision, held meetings with administrators, parents and teachers for months, even years, before school integration was attempted. In other communities where school segregation was caused by de facto segregated neighborhoods and where segregation was not the legal pattern, community-wide action led to such developments as the Princeton plan where all children in certain grades, regardless of race or home address, were sent to one school and all children in other grades sent to the other school. Such plans could not have been successful without a positive climate toward inter-group relations in the community.

Community Responsibility

It is invalid to expect any community or official agency of government to undo all of the wrongs of the past—whether they be social wrongs or administrative wrongs. It *is* valid to assume that all community leaders and civic officials should recognize the fact that positive inter-group relations can best be achieved by joint action and effort on their part. Housing authorities, school boards, planning and zoning commissions, as well as real estate agents and civic groups have a responsibility to be aware of inter-group problems and to take positive action to alleviate them. No one agency, such as the school, should be used as the only approach to inter-group relations; no one agency or community phenomenon, such as housing, should be used as a reason for not acting on other fronts. It is the responsibility of all facets of the leadership of a community to prevent any modern American community from becoming a group of racial, religious, national and economic ghettoes. Positive inter-group relations are best developed in a climate of community participation and action to achieve better inter-group relations.

Numerical Factors

How important is the numerical factor in the development of positive inter-group relations? Some observers of school and housing integration conclude that whenever the percentage of non-whites in a community or a school exceeds 35 per cent, the neighborhood or school will eventually become all non-white. Similar statements have been made on the factor of certain religious minorities. In some communities on Long Island, the Bronx and Queens the non-white population has exceeded 35 percent and the entire community has not become non-white. Several neighborhoods in Westchester County have remained integrated over a long period of time. Some of the factors involved in whether vast population changes occur are: the ethnic and religious grouping of the white population, the socioeconomic status of both the white and non-white population, the availability of other types of housing for both the white and non-white population, and the availability of non-public schooling. The case for maintaining a 35 percent non-white quota in the schools in order to attain good inter-group mixing should be made after the examination of relevant factors. A good many times predictions of neighborhoods changing complexion have actually led to vast and rapid changes usually to the detriment of all involved. Predictions of panic selling usually leads to panic selling. Similarly, if a board of education expects trouble and sub-standard achievement in certain schools with high non-white population without attempting to meet the special needs that the non-white, as well as the white, students have, the schools in changing neighborhoods will become inferior, thus losing their appeal to desirable citizens, white or non-white. The concept of predicting difficulties and then waiting for them to happen is what has been described by one sociologist as "a self-fulfilling prophecy."

Quality of Integration Experience

Aside from the effect of the numerical size of the non-white school population on changing neighborhood residential occupancy patterns is the question of the effect of the number of minority group individuals involved in the inter-group situation. It has been indicated by some experts that the infusion of a few minority group members into the majority situation is best again. Experience shows that there are other variables. Where the barrier being broken is one that has great weight of emotion behind it, such as Negroes in baseball before Jackie Robinson, the reaction to a few minority group members is often violent. On the other hand, where the situation involves a minority group member availing himself of a right about which the majority group has no particular feelings, the acceptance of a small number of minority group persons usually proceeds without much reaction. The reality of the situation is that it is usually difficult to limit the number of minority group participants in inter-group relations, particularly in the public schools where racial discrimination is barred by the Supreme Court decision. Under these circumstances, it seems that the quality of the experience is the determining factor in the quality of inter-group relations. Again, it is relevant to point out that in order to attain positive inter-group relations, those agencies and institutions should look beyond the artificial mechanics of numbers involved into the quality of the inter-group experiences and attempt to maintain a high level of inter-group relationships. It is just as possible to have positive inter-group relations in a 50-50 situation as in a 35-65 situation. Many other factors, such as the quality of the relationships between individuals, are just as relevant as the numerical factor.

Use of Artificial Contacts In Achieving Integration

With the concern for better inter-group relations, some civic leaders have attempted to achieve integration by methods which are relatively artificial. The question arises as to what the artificial nature of the situation does to the self-perception of members of the minority group. The mere transporting of children from one school to another, while it might solely be to achieve integration, is not of itself artificial integration to the extent that the self-perception of the children involved would suffer. The quality of the contacts, the way in which the situation is handled, and acceptance in the new situation are all factors that determine the artificiality of the integration and its result and effect on self-perception. Needless to say, a blatantly artificial situation created for the sole purpose of achieving mixing is apt to be damaging to the self-perceptions of both the minority and majority groups. It is important that the concept of racial integration and positive inter-group relations not be allowed to assume undue proportions and thus be placed in an improper perspective.

* * *

The New Rochelle Decision

by Judge Irving R. Kaufman, U. S. D. J.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This historic decision, dated Jan. 24, 1961, is here presented in part. It was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court after an appeal by the New Rochelle Board of Education (Taylor et als. v. New Rochelle Board of Education, S. D. N. Y. 1961.

The Facts

It is admitted by the defendant that approximately 94 percent of the pupils at Lincoln are Negroes. Plaintiffs contend that the Board has deliberately and intentionally created and maintained Lincoln School as a racially segregated school and thus has violated the Fourteenth Amendment and the principles enunciated in Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

The Board operates the elementary school system in New Rochelle by means of the neighborhood school plan. Under this plan, as it functions in New Rochelle, the city is divided into twelve districts, each of which is served by a centrally located school. Pupils residing within a particular district are required to attend the school within that district, and permission to transfer to other schools is granted by the school authorities only in exceptional circumstances. Thus, as a result of this policy, the plaintiffs have been compelled to attend the Lincoln School. At the start of the 1960 school term, they sought to register in other elementary schools in the city having a more heterogeneous racial composition; permission to so register was uniformly denied, and this action then followed. During the pendency of this action, plaintiffs have withdrawn from the Lincoln School and are receiving private tutoring.

In the fall of 1959, after much public agitation against the racial imbalance in the Lincoln School, the Board proposed to replace the present Lincoln School building, modern facility on the same site to serve the same neighborhood.

Financing for this proposal was approved in a referendum held on May 24, 1960. The plaintiffs view this decision by the Board as the culmination of a course of conduct designed to maintain Lincoln as a racially segregated school. They thus seek an injunction restraining the defendant from proceeding with the construction of the new school. They also seek to enjoin the Board from refusing to allow them to register in schools other than Lincoln which are not racially segregated, and from requiring them to register in the Lincoln School.

The defendant Board vigorously contends that the charge of racial segregation is absurd. Its position is that no child is compelled to attend any school in the City of New Rochelle solely on the basis of race or color.

Lincoln School was built in 1898; there is no evidence as to the Negro population, if any, at that time. Marylynn G. Pierce, a member of the Board of Education testified that there has been a tradition of a a Negro school in New Rochelle for approximately one hundred years, but she did not indicate how this tradition had been inherited by the Lincoln Schools. Events occurring subsequent to 1930 indicate that by that time the majority of the Negro population of the city was being served by the Lincoln School. In 1930, according to the uncontradicted testimony of Bertha O. White, corroborated in part by the testimony of Mrs. Pierce, and also by official school maps, a policy of gerrymandering was instituted which led to the confining of Negroes within the Lincoln School district by redrawing the district lines to coincide with Negro population movements.

In addition to this gerrymandering, the Board instituted further policies to assure that the Lincoln School District would remain Negro, and to relieve white children of the burden of attending a predominantly Negro school. Thus, up until 1949, white children remaining in the Lincoln district were allowed to transfer to other elementary schools.

This policy produced the anomaly, testified to by Mrs. White, of children living in adjoining houses attending different schools solely on the basis of their race.

Further, it appears, for example, the white children living south of the Lincoln School were assigned to Mayflower School, approximately half a mile north of Lincoln. Thus, they apparently had to pass Lincoln each day on their way to school. The inevitable result of this transfer policy, when combined with the earlier gerrymandering was that by January of 1949, Lincoln had become a 100 percent Negro school.

By 1949, the segregated condition at Lincoln had come to public attention, and numerous civic groups exerted pressure on the Board to alleviate it. As a result of this agitation, the Board passed a resolution, on Jan. 11, 1949, ending the policy of transferring white children out of the Lincoln School and indicating that readjustment of district lines would be considered .

At that time, however, the Board did not redistrict in any way nor has it done so until the present day. Thus, it has done nothing to eliminate the effects of this gerrymandering undertaken previously. Rather it has chosen to maintain the status quo, imposing, in effect, a freeze on the artificially created boundaries of the Lincoln district. When it determined to maintain the status quo, the Board could hardly have been unaware that this would necessarily perpetuate Lincoln as a predominantly Negro school.

The Board has steadfastly refused to alter the rigid neighborhod school policy with the result that the Lincoln School has continued to be a predominantly Negro school. Today, it contains approximately 94 percent Negroes.

The years between 1949 and 1960 have been eleven years of agitation for New Rochelle. For eleven years, responsible civic-minded organizations and groups have urged that something be done to correct the Lincoln situation; for eleven years the Board has discussed the problem, hired experts, made surveys, and constantly reiterated its belief in racial equality and the necessity for equal opportunities. But, in these eleven years, it has taken no action whatsoever to alter the racial imbalance in the Lincoln School. It has met the problem with mere words, barren of meaning, for they were never followed by deeds.

In 1954, the Supreme Court rendered its opinion in Brown v. Board of Education, supra.

This decision heralded a new epoch in the quest for equality of the individual. It called for responsible public officials throughout the country to re-appraise their thinking and policies, and to make every effort to afford Negroes the more meaningful equality guaranteed to them by the Constitution. The Brown decision, in short, was a lesson in democracy, directed to the public at large and more particularly to those responsible for the operation of the schools. It imposed a legal and moral obligation upon officials who had created or maintained segregated schools to undo the damage which they had fostered. And, compliance with the Supreme Court's edict was not to be less forthright in the North than in the South; no double standard was to be tolerated.

Dodson Report

The Board hired a distinguished group of educators, psychologists and sociologists, headed by Dr. Dan Dodson, one of the country's foremost experts on the problems of integration.

In December of 1957, this group after an exhaustive study, delivered its report, entitled "Racial Imbalance in Public Education in New Rochelle, New York" (popularly known as the Dodson Report). This report concluded that the Board had been derelict in its duties, and remiss in its attitudes. Moreover, Mr. Dodson testified that his initial proposed report had been even more severe in its criticism of the Board, but that the final report submitted had been toned down so as to make it more acceptable. The Dodson Report framed the essential issue involved as follows:

"Specifically, if the Board of Education in the past, operating in a different social setting, encouraged or permitted the present situation to develop, does the present Board of Education have the obligation to undo any damages which may have accrued under previous decisions of its predecessors? Does the present Board have an obligation to eradicate the imbalance of races in the Lincoln School which was permitted to develop under previous Boards?"

The report pointed out that:

"It is basically through the mechanism of the public school that members of a group occupying an inferior position in our society can achieve equal opportunities. Help in breaking down economic, social and cultural barriers should begin with the public schols."

Comparing the situation to that involved in the Brown case, the report said:

"It seems that morally the situation is little different than the situation which the United States Supreme Court in 1954 found to generate 'a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone.' "

Dodson pointed out that change in New Rochelle was necessary; new facilities were required. Thus, the Board was faced with the necessity of dealing with the racial problem at once. Procrastination had to give way to action.

"The Board must realize that any building or utilization plan it adopts will implicitly make this decision. It is not possible to avoid the question whether racial imbalance is going to be alleviated or encouraged. To do nothing about it is to encourage racial imbalance. To do nothing about it is a decision just as powerful and as important as a decision to try to do something about the imbalance."

The report pointed out that the Board alone was in a position to immediately alleviate segregation:

"At this time the Board of Education is in a position to eliminate de facto segregation in schools by it decision on a matter which has to be resolved—namely how to accommodate the increasing numbers of students in the public schools of New Rochelle. Obviously the racial imbalance in the school is related to the housing patterns. The housing patterns, however, cannot be changed overnight. The school district boundaries can."

The Dodson Report discussed the concern for "status" of various schools which has apparently been a strong motivating factor in the Board's conduct through the years.

"The panel was puzzled that in a city as dynamic as New Rochelle, in a decade, with insignificant exceptions, few children from the outside have ever been sent into the three schools located in the low socioeconomic status neighborhoods."

Dodson commented on "What seems to be a lack of willingness on the part of the Board to move district lines" and found that "Acquiescence has heightened concern as to the 'status' of one school as against another with the result that there is almost a 'phobia' about the district lines in several of the schools surrounding Washington, Lincoln and Columbus."

The experts found, as a result of the survey, that the Board had been largely responsible for the situation.

"The panel believes the Board of Education has adhered too rigidly to establish district lines for elementary schools. It has tended to make under-use of some facilities at the expense of over-crowding in others. This policy has reinforced the 'status appeal' of some schools and depreciated others. It has helped fragment the community into neighborhoods identified by school attended and make more provincial the experience of all children."

With respect to the rebuilding of Lincoln School, Dodson said:

"To do so would further reinforce the segregation of Negroes. It would leave two schools in the same neighborhood (Washington and Columbus) only partially used and it would reinforce community fragmentation."

Subsequently the Board made it clear that it saw only one course of action; rebuild the Lincoln School on its present site. This, as Dodson made clear, could mean only the continuing of segregation at Lincoln.

This, then, completes the picture of Board intransigence and refusal to act through the years. The "freeze" placed by the Board in 1949 on the already gerrymandered boundaries of the Lincoln district remained unchanged, despite eleven years of public agitation, pleas and advice from distinguished educators and sociologists. And, what is more the Board has not evidenced any intention to change its policies in the future.

The Law

Any discussion of the applicable law must begin with the case of Brown v. Board of Education, supra. Principles long accepted by psychologists and sociologists were given the stature of the law of the land. The Supreme Court made it clear that in the field of public education separate but equal was inherently unequal, and hence violation of the Constitution. Thus, the operation of separate schools for whites and Negroes was proscribed. Those school authorities throughout the country which had operated such separate schools were instructed to implement desegregation, in good faith. "with all deliberate speed."

I hold that the Board of Education of New Rochelle by its conduct in the years prior to 1949, created and established the Lincoln School as a segregated, Negro school. Thus formulated, the present case falls squarely within the plain meaning of the Brown decision.

The Board contends that since Lincoln School is not in form a component of a dual system of education for whites and Negroes such as was invalidated by Brown, and since the school contains 942 Negroes rather than 100 per cent Negroes, there can be no violation of the Fourteenth Amendment or of the Brown principles.

But, this contention misconstrues the underlying premise of the Brown rationale. That opinion, while dealing with a state-maintained dual system of education was premised on the factual conclusion that a segregated education created and maintained by official acts had a detrimental and deleterious effect on the educational and mental development of the minority group children. The unanimous Court, speaking through Chief Justice Warren, declared that segregation of Negro children especially in their formative years "generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."

The Court further emphasized the necessity of giving these minority-group children the opportunity for extensive contact with other children at an early stage in their educational experience, finding such contact to be indispensable if children of all races and creeds were to become inculcated with a meaningful understanding of the essentials of our democratic way of life. That the benefits inherent in an integrated education are essential to the proper development of all children has been reiterated time and again by the many witnesses in the present case, including those called by the defendant.

With these principles clear in mind, I see no basis to draw a distinction, legal or moral, between segregation established by the formality of a dual system of education, as in Brown, and that created by gerrymandering of school district lines and transferring of white children as in the instant case. The result is the same in each case: the conduct of responsible school officials has operated to deny to Negro children the opportunities for a full and meaningful educational experience guaranteed to them by the Fourteenth Amendment. Further, the fact that the Lincoln School contains approximately 6% whites, surely cannot divest Lincoln of its segregated character. In a community such as New Rochelle, the presence of some 29 white children certainly does not afford the 454 Negro children in the school the educational and social contacts and interaction envisioned by Brown.

Having created a segregated school, the Constitution imposed upon the Board the duty to end segregation, in good faith, and with all deliberate speed. It is patently clear that this obligation has not been fulfilled.

The Board argues that the study which it has given to the problem, and the surveys which it has requested, conclusively indicate its good faith. But, history is made, and Constitutional rights vindicated, by deeds, not by talk, resolutions, and fine phrases. As already indicated, the Board has discussed the problem, hired experts, made surveys, and constantly reiterated verbally its belief in racial equality and the necessity for equal opportunities. But the fact remains that, in eleven years, not one single act was taken to implement these expressed principles. And, the Board's attitude, as indicated by its overt conduct, has been one of negation; it has publicly disclaimed all responsibility for the Lincoln problem. . . .

I cannot accept the proposition that in this relatively small community in the north, men of good will, wisdom and ingenuity could not have devised a plan for the orderly desegregation of the Lincoln School.

If the school boards could satisfy their obligations under the Fourteenth Amendment merely by waiting complacently until an "ideal" solution presented itself, the Brown decision, and the advances in the area of individual equality which it represents, would be a virtual nullity. Brown, if it meant anything, meant much more than this. Necessarily implied in its proscription of segregation was the positive obligation of eliminating it. This obligation requires both good faith, and action with dispatch, and I am compelled to the conclusion that the Board of Education of New Rochelle has complied with neither of these requirements in the present case.

I also conclude that if a Board of Education enters into a course of conduct motivated by a purposeful desire to perpetuate and maintain a segregated school, the constitutional rights of those confined within this segregated establishment have been violated.

If a Board of Education selects a school site, or otherwise operates its schools, with a purposeful desire to segregate, or to maintain segregation, the Constitution has been violated.

If such motivation is present, it makes no meaningful difference whether the segregation involved is maintained directly or through formal separation, or indirectly, through over-rigid adherence to artificially created boundary lines as in the present case.

Similarly it is of no moment whether the segregation is labelled by the defendant as "de jure" or "de facto," as long as the Board, by its conduct, is responsible for its maintenance.

The defendant argues, however, that the neighborhood school policy is a reasonable and educationally sound one, and thus that it is not violating the Constitution in adhering to it. But, this argument ignores the essential nature of the plaintiffs' position. They are not attacking the concept of the neighborhood school as an abstract proposition. They are, rather, attacking its application so as to deny opportunities guaranteed to them by the Constitution. It is a legal truism that "acts generally lawful may become unlawful when done to accomplish an unlawful end."

Moreover, as Justice Frankfurter succinctly noted:

"Local customs, however hardened by time, are not decreed in heaven."

The neighborhood school policy certainly is not sacrosanct. It is valid only insofar as it is operated within the confines established by the Constitution. It cannot be used as an instrument to confine Negroes within an area artificially delineated in the first instance by official acts. If it is so used, the Constitution has been violated and court must intervene.

The court thus indicated that it would not permit the school authorities to confine integration to a bare token under the guise of a neighborhood school plan. The Evans decision clearly answers the Board's contention that since Negroes are free to move to other districts, they are not being required to attend a segregated school. Moreover, the Board indicates a naivete in not recognizing the difficulties inherent in changing long-established residential patterns.

The Board raises several other contentions in an attempt to justify its conduct. With respect to its refusal to institute permissive zoning. . . . the Board argues that it would be violative of the law to accord Negro special privileges not allowed to other minority groups. It points to the fact that several other elementary schools in New Rochelle have student compositions which are primarly of one religious or national-origin group. . . . There are instances where it is not only justified, but necessary, to provide for such allegedly "unequal treatment" in order to achieve the equality guaranteed by the Constitution.

The Lincoln School was established as an all-Negro school by the gerrymandering of district lines, and by the transfer of white children residing in the district to schools outside the district. The Board of Education of the City of New Rochelle was responsible for both of these policies. Subsequent to 1949, the Board by its arbitrary rejection of all proposals for change has purposefully maintained Lincoln as a segregated school. This decision is rendered on the facts in this case and holds that, in the instant situation, Constitutional rights have been violated.

In conclusion, the words of Justice Frankfurter bear repetition:

"That the responsibility of those who exercise power in a democratic government is not to reflect inflamed public feeling but to help form its understanding, is especially true when they are confronted with a problem like a racially discriminating public school system. This is the lesson to be drawn from the heartening experience in ending enforced racial segregation in the public schools in cities with Negro populations of large proportions. Compliance with decisions of this Court, as the constitutional organ of the supreme law of the land, has often, throughout our history, depended on active support by state and local authorities: it presupposes such support. To withhold it, and indeed to use political power to try to paralyze the supreme law, precludes the maintenance of our federal system as we have known and cherished it for one hundred and seventy years."

Litigation is an unsatisfactory way to resolve issues such as have been presented here. . . . Men of good will, such as the individual members of the Board submit they are, could have solved and still can solve the problem by exercising the judgment and understanding for which they presumably were chosen. The School Board is a public body charged with a public responsibility. This responsibility must be exercised solely in the best interests of the children attending the schools. The Board cannot relieve itself of this responsibility by giving the community whatever result might gratify the impulse of the moment. Nothing can be permitted to conflict with the Board's moral and legal obligation.

The Decree

In determining the manner in which the Negro children residing within the Lincoln district are to be afforded the opportunities guaranteed by the Constitution, I will follow the procedure authorized by the Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education, 349 U.S. 294 (1955), and utilized by many district courts in implementing the Brown principles. Thus, I deem it unnecessary at this time to determine the extent to which each of the items of relief requested by plaintiffs will be afforded. Instead, the Board is hereby ordered to present to this Court, on or before April 14, 1961, a plan for desegregation in accordance with this Opinion, said desegregation to begin no later than the start of the 1961-62 school year. This court will retain jurisdiction of this action until such plan has been presented approved by the court, and then implemented.

The foregoing Opinion will constitute the court's findings of fact and conclusions of law.

The Leadership Role of School Officials in Integration

by Florence D. Shelley*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mrs. Shelley is a member of the Board of Directors of the New Rochelle Guidance Center and President of the New Rochelle Council of PTAs. We have selected from her longer report those sections describing the desegregation process in New Rochelle up to September 1964. Following the events of 1961, a new Board of Education was elected and a new Superintendent of Schools was appointed.

When the schools in New Rochelle opened in September of 1964, the beginning of the second year of dispersal began for the Lincoln School children in this northern suburban community. For those youngsters whose parents had elected to send them out of their neighborhood school district under the terms of a Federal Court edict, it was the fourth year of transfer.

The sights of the school district were already beyond the physical transfer of children from a "de facto" segregated school. Studies that would lead to improved and more effective education for the "culturally deprived and economically disadvantaged" were already under way and various programs were being considered to make equal educational opportunity more than a slogan.

That this school district, except for occasional harassment, is now able to concentrate on the substance in the classroom rather than argument in the court or demonstration in the street, while other communitiees are still bitterly embroiled in the terrible tensions and conflict that accompany the desegregation of schools north and south, makes it worthwhile to consider how New Rochelle reached this next step.

New Rochelle is a small city of approximately 80,000 in Westchester County, close to the New York City border. It consists mainly of a commuting population; it has minial industry and commerce. Indeed, its over-long attachment to the notion that it was only a residential community of homes, schools, and churches, accounts today for the fact that commerce is minial and taxes for the home owner who must finance education among other city services are increasingly burdensome. Rises in educational cost that can be attributed to efforts to realize integration, therefore, often underlie much of the continuing community conflicts over school financing. In closing the Lincoln School, the Board of Education in New Rochelle in fact saved almost $100,000 a year in operating costs. Its transportation of the Lincoln School children, under the State Aid Formula, costs the New Rochelle taxpayer $10.45 per child, or in 1963-4, $6,941.71 for all the elementary school children, Lincoln, private and parochial, who are bussed. However, when budgetary pressures within the city caused the Board of Education to cut back in several areas of special services for all children, there was grumbling in some quarters about the cost of transporting "them"—a euphemism for Negroes.

In Retrospect — 1964

When one looks back over the long years of controversy in this community and tries to assess the efforts that were made by responsible officials to solve the problem, it is interesting to note that perhaps the final catalyst that made the whole thing possible was the passage in the State Legislature of certain recommendations made by the Diefendorf Committee, by which the State returned to the local community 90% of its costs for aproved transportation. But this is another aspect of the story which should perhaps be dealt with in another paper.

Although most of the other elementary schools had smaller or larger numbers of Negro children in attendance, in direct relation to their proximity to the center of the city, the Lincoln School was the only elementary school with an almost 100% Negro student population. Since the Lincoln School was closed in June of 1962, there have been 11 functioning elementary schools, 2 junior high schools (at either end of the city), and one comprehensive senior high school.

In the early 1950's when the Board of Education was wearing itself out over the Lincoln School, the State Education Department declared portions of the old school unsafe and the Board was forced to consider portions of the old school unsafe and the Board was forced to consider how it would presently house the Lincoln children. Should they close the school? Should they build another school on the same site? Should they build a K-3 school on that site and disperse the upper grade children to other schools? Should they disperse all the children? Should they build a new school for the Lincoln and Washington districts combined? Should they redistrict the entire city?

To help them answer these questions, the Board secured the services of a group of social scientists from New York University. Headed by Dan Dodson, Director of NYU's Institute for Human Relations, the committee worked hard and long, as had many groups before, to offer a reasonable solution, economically sound, educationally defensible, socially desirable, morally right. As others had discovered before, this was not a simple task.

The Dodson Report

The bulk of the Dodson report is a penetrating analysis of New Rochelle's problem. Its definition of the Board's role was valid then and is valid today in any community. Its specific advice to the Board, unacceptable finally to any of the interested parties, went largely unheeded. The Dodson report pointed out the tremendous gains to be made by courage and experimentation, and warned of the dangers of heightening the crisis in New Rochelle by avoiding action. This prophecy, like so many others, was indeed fulfilled. It was not until a new Board of Education was appointed and a new Superintendent, that the call for courage and experimentation was heard. In all fairness to those who went before, the "times" had vastly changed.

It is certainly true that the Boards of Education which dealt with the Lincoln School problem tried their "best." But always their responses were reflections of the "majority" view in the community, and not the step ahead which their position of leadership demanded. In 1957, Dr. Dodson's group reminded them of their role and responsibility.

"If the Board of Education has any responsibilities to do more than see that basic courses are taught in the school (and we are sure that the Board well recognizes that it has such), the responsibility for exercising leadership in the field of education broadly conceived would seem to be a paramount one. We believe the Board should take the *initiative* (italics mine) in bringing together other governmental agencies and interested groups on the basic problems of race relations in New Rochelle of which the racial imbalance in the schools is only one aspect."

The then Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Herbert Clish, repeatedly sent messages to the Board in this connection. He called attention to the housing patterns in the city which were solidifying the Lincoln neighborhood situation and asked for school board initiative to meet with other agencies to effect creative and effective housing solutions, but little came of this.

"The action of the Board in this matter (racial balance in the schools) could have profound influence throughout the country," continued the Dodson report, and indeed this came to pass.

The Board of Education in 1959 chose to put to referendum the building of a new Lincoln School on the same site. The majority of voters in the Lincoln district rejected it. The majority of voters in New Rochelle as a whole voted for the new school. Immediately, a group of parents in the Lincoln area initiated court action to enjoin the Board of Education from building the new school. Some parents demanded that their children, residents of the Lincoln district be registered and accepted as students at other schools in the city. The demands were rejected by the Board and thus began the celebrated court case that ended in Judge Irving Kaufman's decision that the Lincoln School was a "de facto" segregated school. The community was in a ferment. Sides were taken on the matter of whether or not there should be an appeal. The Board decided to appeal. The appeals were lost. The matter was brought to the Supreme Court of the United States. Review was denied. Permissive transfer in New Rochelle began. The city had the dubious distinction of being the first northern city to be involved in such a matter. In time, the Superintendent, who had worked hard and long but not "ahead" of the community, resigned. A new Superintendent, Dr. David G. Salten, came to New Rochelle. Four members of the Board of Education, including the President who had led the Board through this action, resigned. New members were appointed by the Mayor with the advice of a Citizens Advisory Committee.

"Clearly an experimental attitude is needed," said the Dodson report in 1957. On the evening that the new Board of Education in New Rochelle decided to close the Lincoln School, and demolish it, they had at hand not only the pressure of the Negro people, not only an historic call from the President of the United States that very evening for moral action in Civil Rights, not only the strong urgings of their own moral position as it had been stated throughout the preceding year, but the "experimental attitude" and leadership of their own Superintendent.

Said Dr. Dodson six years before: "New Rochelle has always enjoyed a very high reputation as a school system and as a community. It has always been a pioneer, not a follower. It is unthinkable that now it would want to reverse its role, when perhaps it can pioneer in an area more significant than those of its previous achievement, namely the area of bringing about better inter-group relations for the mutual welfare of all groups."

Lincoln Classes

To close the Lincoln School the Board had to abandon the "Neighborhood school" for that area. To quiet the misgivings which arose in the community, the Board announced its adherence to the neighborhood school policy for areas other than the Lincoln area. To prevent the schools immediately contiguous to Lincoln from becoming new Lincoln Schools, the Board sought and obtained from the Federal Court permission to modify the method of selection of schools so that it would retain the right of assignment where necessary to carry out the spirit of the Court edict. To close the Lincoln School and not penalize those children with the cost of transportation, the Board instituted a program of free transportation for all elementary school children K through 6 in the city who lived more than 1-½ miles from their schools.

Beset by controversy, tension an conflict, this Board of Education could have

Office of Education-EEOP

Research and Materials Branch

given up as others had before in a search for a solution. It would be foolish to say that all this has been achieved with the full cooperation of the community. But times indeed have changed and the moral rightness of integration may often be covertly challenged, but is rarely openly attacked.

If ever a group of brain trusters were vindicated by the turn of events, the Dodson team were in many ways. But far out as they may have been at the time, even they were not suggesting the solutions that eventually were offered. Unquestionably the Board in 1957 was not equipped to resist community pressures for the status quo. Ironically, the demands were not as extreme at that point either. If one chose to speculate, one would wonder what would have happened if indeed, the Board had dispersed the older children to other schools, and had built the K-3 school in the Lincoln area, which even the NAACP had found acceptable then. Without housing changes, such a school would have been a segregated school even as Dodson conceived it. By 1963 would such a school have become intolerable?

Again the sanctity of the "neighborhood school" was respected by many who later chose to abandon rigid adherence to it. They were compelled by a greater moral force to accept the need to end the segregated school patterns.

While the 1957 Board was being urged to act by Dr. Dodson, he also reminded them that "New Rochelle has a great history of tolerance and understanding upon which to draw. In many respects she is better prepared to meet this issue than most other communities."

By the time the resolution came six years later, the reservoir of tolerance and understanding had almost run dry. So sore are the bruises still, that matters which might command only the slightest interest in other communities, are subjected to the closest scrutiny. Suspicions run high, and feelings higher. Everyone, particularly those in education, are vulnerable to attack by some citizens in the community who cannot forget who actually closed the Lincoln School. One school board member's child was told by a playmate: "My mommy hates your daddy. He's ruining this town."

The Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools are concentrating on the many educational and community factors that will contribute to their goal of educational excellence for all the children of New Rochelle. To repair the strains and tears in New Rochelle, great efforts are being expended as well by many deeply concerned citizens who feel that a great forward stride in human relations is the next necessary step to make successful the whole integration process.

NOTE: Florence D. Shelley of New Rochelle, New York, and a member of the NYS Citizens Committee for Public Schools is a member of the Board of Directors, New Rochelle Guidance Center; of the Mayor's Advisory Committee; of the Youth Committee of the Council of Social Services; and president, New Rochelle Council of PTAs.

MT. VERNON

Time Table of Events

1963—June 14—James E. Allen, Jr., Commissioner of Education for the State of New York, asked the Board of Education of Mount Vernon to report to him regarding the problem of racial imbalance in the schools, the progress that had been attained in eliminating it, and a plan for further action.

The Center for Human Relations and Community Studies at New York University was asked by the Board of Education to work with them and their Committee on Racial Imbalance in the Public Schools to survey the school system and its needs.

July 5—The Board issued a statement of immediate intent "to carry out the elimination of racial imbalance in the intent of Dr. Allen's letter."

1964—Feb. 6—Dr. Dan W. Dodson, Director of the Center for Human Relations and Community Studies, submitted his report recommending that the neighborhood school concept be abandoned and that 3,000 of the 7,000 elementary school children be bussed across town.

Feb. 13—The Committee on Racial Imbalance in the Public Schools submitted its report supporting the Dodson recommendations nine to one; Joseph S. Ragno, the dissenting member, also submitted a minority report.
Feb. 25—A meeting to consider the Dodson report was sponsored by the Mount Vernon Council on Human Relations. Sizable numbers of persons walked out in protest against the Dodson report.

Mar. 6—The Board of Education announced a plan for open enrollment. With 1,934 Negroes in the elementary schools with the greatest imbalance and only 176 vacancies in the predominently white schools, the local NAACP announced that it would swamp the Board with requests for transfer, but less than a hundred materialized.

Mar. 12—The Board of Education rejected the Dodson plan after a Parent Taxpayer Association was formed and a petition with 8,000 names rejected the plan.

May 17—A demonstration at City Hall Plaze on the 10th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision on segregation was poorly attended.

May 18—A school boycott was called during which 6,400 of the city's 11,718 public school pupils were absent. This lasted two days without untoward incident.

Racial Factors in Public Elementary Education, Mount Vernon, N. Y.

by Dan W. Dodson*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Only the intricacies of local statistics and detailed reference to logistics have been cut from this report.

Background

On June 14, 1963, James E. Allen, Jr., Commissioner of Education for the State of New York, asked the Board of Education to report to him:

1. The situation in Mt. Vernon with regard to any problem of racial imbalance.
2. Statement of policy by the Board of Education with respect to the maintenance of racial balance.
3. A report of progress in the direction of eliminating racial imbalance.
4. A plan for further action, including estimates of additional costs, if any, and the time required for carrying out a plan.

To this request, the Board responded with a census of racial distribution of pupils in the school system; presented an excellent statement of policy; indicated in a progress report that the community-wide high school was a first step in meeting the challenge of racial imbalance; announced the appointment of a 12 member Citizens Advisory Committee on racial imbalance; expressed its determination to invite experts to consult with the Board on how to deal with the problem; directed the Superintendent of Schools to plan an in-service program of training for teachers; extended the "Talent Search" program already under way; and determined to secure guidance teachers to assist in dealing with problems related to intergroup relations. It was under the action related to the "use of experts" that the Center for Human Relations and Community Studies of New York University was employed to work with both the Board of Education and the Advisory Committee.

The Problem

The problem with which this report deals relates to the fact that Mount Vernon is bisected east and west by the New Haven Railroad, has five elementary schools south of the tracks which are together 75.07 per cent non-white in their elementary and kindergarten enrollments (as of November 8, 1963), while six schools above the tracks range from 2.65 to 15.85 per cent non-white with a combined percentage amounting to only 7.08. The per cent non-white for the entire school system K-6 is 43.37.

In regard to this situation, the Board unanimously adopted the following statement on July 5, 1963:

> "This Board has given careful consideration to the principles contained in the letter—from Commissioner Allen—which said in part ' . . . racial imbalance existing in a school in which the enrollment is wholly or predominately Negro interferes with the achievement of equality of educational opportunity and must, therefore, be eliminated from the schools of New York State.' This Board announces that it shall take immediate steps to carry out the elimination of racial imbalance in the intent of Dr. Allen's letter."

This report is the recommendation of The Center for Human Relations and Community Studies' of New York University on meeting the spirit of the above action.

The Problem's Physical Context

These physical factors are revelant in considering the problem:

1. Mount Vernon, N. Y. is approximately four square miles in area.
2. There are approximately 77,500 residents in the city.
3. The non-white population constituted approximately 20 percent of the total in 1960.
4. Mount Vernon is a suburban community bordering the Bronx on its south, the Pelhams on the east, Eastchester and Bronxville on the north and Yonkers on the west.
5. The city is almost saturated with residential and business development. It is one of the ten most densely populated cities of America.
6. There is a relatively good balance between business, industrial, and residential use of land. Hence the burden of education upon the residents of the community is not onerous.
7. The Board of Education has fiscal independence.
8. There are considerable plans underway for urban renewal and neighborhood conservation.

The Problem's Educational Context

1. The school system has operated on what might be called a "color blind" policy prior to the Commissioner's directive. This means there are no records of racial composition of the schools before December 1961, when such a census was made at the request of the State Department of Education.
2. It would be difficult to contend that there had been discrimination against schools as they became Negro. Factors such as class size, qualifications of teachers, tenure of teachers, and expenditures for supplies and materials are as favorable for these schools as for the others.
3. There can be no complaints of gerrymandering or otherwise discriminating by manipulation of schools zones in the elementary grades, since these boundaries, with minor exceptions, have been unaltered for many years.
4. There might be complaint concerning junior high school boundaries if enough weight were given to racial imbalance in drawing them. Under the "color blind" philosophy, the neighborhood policy of school attendance and available space, as past patterns are defensible. Present plans include alterations which, if carried out, will provide a different and more defensible approach to school assignment in the junior high school.
5. The children of the predominately Negro schools do not score as high an I.Q. and achievement tests as the children in the other schools. This, it should be understood, is comparison of composite scores, and does not represent individual achievement. It should also be understood that these figures could be misleading, in that the mobility of the student population on the South Side is greater than on the north. One simple figure will suffice to indicate how much this amounts to. Between December 1961, and November 1963, there was a gain in enrollment of Negro children of 464 and a decline of 205 white children in the five schools south of the New Haven Railroad.
6. One gains the impression that the school system is geared to a middle income, relatively high status community, and is only now beginning to understand the import of gearing programs to the incoming population which has a large portion of lower socio-economic status children.
7. A general impression is that in philosophy, the school system is committed to the relatively small class sized, self-contained classroom (K-3), and that team teaching, programmed instruction, and

other such types of educational innovation have not yet been experimented with.

8. There are no evidences of discrimination in employment or assignment of teachers.

9. Only one of the elementary buildings has lunch facilities.

10. The zoning for neighborhood schools in the past has made it possible for all children to go home to lunch. The schools close for more than one hour at lunch time.

11. The Board of Education provides no transportation for children, except those who are handicapped and then as prescribed by law.

12. All existing facilities are at or near capacity in their utilization.

General Trends

Between June of 1963 and November of the same year the five schools south of the railroad had a decline of 93 white children and increase of 110 non-white. The analysis by grades for the schools in the south end of the community indicates increased pressure from the non-white segment of the community. The trend is toward a decline in enrollment of the whites, even if there were no white withdrawal due to the fact that Negro children are more predominately concentrated in the lower grades than in the upper grades.

This pattern is further borne out by the census data. For the area south of the tracks in 1960 there were 152 whites to every 100 Negroes in the total population. In ages above 14 there were 163 whites to 100 Negroes, but in the "under 14 years of age" group there were 148 whites to every 100 Negroes. In the "under 5 years of age" category there were only 106 whites to every 100 non-whites.

This change of racial occupancy in the community has still other implications. The white population was much less dependent upon the public schools for education than is the incoming group. In 1960 when the census was taken there were 1.17 whites per each non-white in the "5-14 age" category, but the December 1961 school census of first through fifth grades indicated there was a ratio only of .52 whites for each non-white in the public schools. In 1963 (June) this had dropped to .39.

A closely related factor is housing. Occupancy patterns present a decline for units with three or more persons and a corresponding increase of one or two person occupancies. This indicates a larger amount of single person occupancy with its attendant transiency, and a corresponding cutting of residential houses into multiple occupancies. It also represents a corresponding crowding in those units which have children.

Another outstanding consideration is the relation of Mount Vernon to the remainder of the Metropolitan community. Since it is thought of as a suburb of the inner city, and since it borders on the Bronx, it seems useful to assess its future population trends in relation to the total.

In some respects Mount Vernon is now two communities. "Below the tracks" has a literal significance. "Above the tracks" (north) is almost all a typical suburban residential area, containing large homes, zoned high rise and three-story garden apartment type developments.

Below the tracks there is more industry, and more modest homes. As indicated above these homes are rapidly being converted from private residences to small one and two person apartments in erstwhile one family structures.

Considered as a whole, however, Mount Vernon is almost exactly the Metropolis in microcosm. It has slightly more Negro population than does the remainder of the Metropolis, but less Puerto Rican. The assumption here is that each community has a responsibility to take its share of the "Metropolitan mix" of population. No community has the right to hide behind zoning, political boundaries, and other such exclusion devices and accept only high income, low welfare cost populations, and at the same time try as many have done to attract the select inustries to help lower the tax base on community services.

By the same token, no community does itself or the cause of public welfare a service by allowing itself to become inundated with low income, high welfare cost, marginal populations to the end that it loses the capacity to serve adequately those who are its responsibility. Mount Vernon has not dodged its responsibility in taking its share of the "Metropolitan mix." Unless it can find means of planning, however, to limit the flow of incoming marginal population, it will soon be "beyond the point of no return" as an economically and socially integrated community. This is particularly true of the South Side of town.

Hundreds of middle class Negroes have bought homes in this section within the past several years—particularly in the western part. The indications are that as the city fathers saw the incoming Negro group, they assumed the section would go slum. Hence the controls of occupancy have been relaxed to the point that all home owners' investments have been jeopardized by the changes in residential occupancy. Because they thought the section would be a slum they behaved toward it as if it were. Hence they ushered in their own prophecy. Unless this is stopped, there is little use for this report. In a few years the entire area will be inhabited by low—income marginal groups—regardless of which group is at the bottom of the social-economic heap at the time—for all who can afford it will move elsewhere. As the low income group, which is high welfare cost, comes into political dominance, this exodus will also spread to the North Side and Mount Vernon will lose its stability as an integrated community. This would be no service to any groups involved.

Planning for schools is useless unless there is also consideration of these broader community trends. Communities have been given many tools with which to fight blight and upheaval and secure orderly change. Planning, however, still lacks the imagination with which to cope with the issues. It tends to be too slow—by the time present plans are executed in Mount Vernon it could be "too late—too little." The planning tends to be on the part of the power structure of the community, and frequently does not include a broad enough base of involvement and participation. Planning itself needs to re-examine some of its assumptions, such as the one that the neighborhood school is the basis of community planning.

It is the belief of the consultant that there is still time for planning which would have as its objective trying to prevent the inundation of the community with an inordinate share of the industrial population which is low income—high welfare cost. As such stability is achieved, the community can make a real contribution to social welfare and social planning if it will then demonstrate what can be done to use the resources of community service, schools, recreation, health and other facilities to wipe out the inequities which exist between the socially disadvantaged and the advantaged among its citizenry. In this undertaking, of course, the schools would play a stellar role.

Educational Considerations

We come now to the educational considerations underlying the racial imbalance issue.

1. The first outstanding fact is that the high school serves all the community, and almost everyone seems proud of it and justly they may be.
2. The junior high schools are considerably imbalanced, but plans have been projected which would remodel the Davis plant (the former high school building) so that together with the Washington School on the South Side, the two together will provide for the junior high school population. With appropriate zoning, a

racial imbalance can be prevented. This report goes on the assumption that this will go forward.

3. The elementary schools as indicated earlier are zoned on the neighborhood principle, and the boundaries have scarcely been changed for many years.

4. The issue of educational philosophy stemming from the confrontation in Mount Vernon are less clear. They are summarized here:

1). Should race be a factor in educational policy making?

Prior to December of 1961 the school system operated on a policy popularly referred to as "color blind". This was taken from the famous phrase used by Justice Harlan in 1896 in his dissent in the Plessy v. Ferguson decision. He said "... any arm of government dealing with the people should be color blind." Indeed, all our legislation dealing with discrimination in employment, education and accommodations uses the phrase "without regard to race, creed, or color".

When, in 1954, the Supreme Court rendered the Brown decision it ruled unconstitutional the segregation of children in education because of race. There was left, however, the issue of the responsibility of a Board of Education in a community where there had never been legal or dejure segregation but where children were assigned to de facto segregated schools. Subsequent litigation, particularly in New Rochelle, N. Y., indicated that where it could be proved that past discrimination in drawing boundaries or absence of overt attention to imbalance had resulted in a school becoming de facto segregated, the plaintiffs were entitled to relief. With regard to the color blind aspect of policy Judge Irving R. Kaufman in this case said, "You don't have to be that blind."

Subsequent to the New Rochelle decision the legal aspects of the issue become confused. The Commissioners of Education of two states (New York and New Jersey) have ruled (Orange, N. J.; Englewood, N. J. and Malvern, N. Y.) that while there were no findings of overt discrimination, the racially imbalanced schools do not meet the educational requirements of children, hence must be eliminated. This emphasis on educational quality rather than civil rights charts a new dimension of intergroup relations.

Commissioner Allen's request for a racial census in New York State, coupled with his directive asking what is being done about de facto segregated schools, indicates the issue which confronts school systems in dealing with this issue. By and large, such schools as become de facto segregated do not achieve the educational standards of those which are not. Only the racists would contend that the reason for this is that children with varying amount of Negroid heritage are innately incapable. Almost all would agree that the differences which appear are cultural. These will be dealt with at a later point, but the problem of policy which presents itself here is that if there is a cultural difference, which is attached to race which seems painfully evident, how can it be dealt with in education without acknowledging it?

2) Can the de facto segregated school afford equal educational opportunity?

The significance of the issue is readily apparent. The courts ruled that the de jure segregated school did not and could not afford such opportunity. Data on the de facto segregated school are equivocal. However, the sparse data to the present indicate that "mixing" per se has not appreciably improved the academic achievement of minority children. The experiments which have been attempted have not been refined enough to provide definitive answers to the question.

Beyond the scholastic performance, however, is the issue of citizenship values. These are even harder to measure but no less significant. In fact, they can be evaluated only in terms of educational philosophies which tend to be contradictory. This is well reflected in Mount Vernon, if the communications sent to the Board of Education are any criteria. Many were convinced that educational standards could not be maintained if the children of Negro parents were mixed with those of the whites. Some recommended that schools be organized on an ability basis so that the most academically facile children would go to one school and the less gifted to the next, and so on until the least facile were in a school together.

During the past few years there has been extraordinary effort to improve the schools in the less advantaged areas. Programs such as New York City's "High Horizons," and numerous others have been designed to experiment with bringing the child of the slum background into full scale educational participation. When the issue of de facto segregation arises, this aspect of program tends to be offered as a panacea. While all such efforts at experimentation which seek to help children achieve fuller potential are to be welcomed, these should not be thought of as substitutes for desegregated education. Negroes have had a long experience with efforts to "make separate equal" in many aspects of community life. There is little evidence that such efforts, even "massive crash programs", have achieved the goal.

One of the major reasons why they have not achieved their goal is implicit in the statement accompanying Commissioner Allen's directive. Practically all communities of size have neighborhood schools which are of less status than others. Such schools most often have the minority group enrollment. Children who attend them have less expected of them than is expected of the remainder of the community. Teachers who teach in them are considered less fortunate than those who teach elsewhere. Many (not necessarily referring to Mount Vernon) spend their professional lives working with human materials they fundamentally do not respect. They tend to excuse such children from performances which would be demanded of others. Many pity the children they teach, and this is often the most traumatizing treatment of all.

If a whole culture looks upon the segregated school as inferior, does not this in fact make it is? If so, does not the requirement to attend it deprive a child of his civil and human rights? Can morale be maintained in staff? Can standards be kept up? It is doubtful that they can.

The Allen directive gives local school boards cause for sober reflection as to their responsibility in this matter. In Mount Vernon, for instance, as in many other communities, composite intelligence and achievement scores are not published. The reason is that they would only further reinforce the stereotype as to the reputation of the school-regardless of the amount of exoneration which may be due the leadership of the schools, or how much individual children may achieve in proportion to their abilities.

In no small measure it is because of these considerations that many have despaired that the segregated school can never be made equal. The Supreme Court's phrasing is pertinent to this aspect of the problem:

"We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of separate but equal has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

3). How valid is the neighborhood school concept?

One of the greatest hurdles to overcome in dealing with de facto segregation is the defense of the neighborhood school. It has been a tradition in American life that children attend school within their neighborhood. However, many school systems (e.g. Baltimore and Philadelphia) allow children to go to schools of their choice provided there is space. The most pronounced trend of rural education has been the consolidation program which brought children out of more provincial, circumscribed neighborhoods into wider participation. In many respects the "neighborhood" is a variation of the community school idea in educational theory. This community, however, had the opposite connotation to that of the neighborhood idea. It was thought of as a means of bringing in rather than shutting out differences. A case could be made that neighborhood school has become a tremendously undemocratic device. If one examines how much consideration is given to which school children attend, he is impressed with the extent to which the neighborhood school has become a "turf" on which people shield themselves from meaningful encounters with each other. There is little doubt but that it fragments the community and serves as a divisive influence as each neighborhood group strives for special concessions for itself.

The worst aspect of its application, perhaps, is that it allows the broader community to become insensitive to the needs of children of the low income schools. In the name of cultural pluralism, many minority groups of the past were concentrated in schools reflective of their neighborhoods, and school systems excused their inability to get creativity from such children on the basis of their being culturally or economically deprived. There are vestiges of this historical aspect of the neighborhood school in Mount Vernon, which relate to other than the Negro group.

It was this dimension of education which Commissioner Allen was trying to call to the attention of the Boards of Education. It is the part of neighborhood school policy which traumatizes not only the minority person who is its victim, but the children of the entire community because it creates undemocratic attitudes of one group toward another. The school desegregation issue only brings it more forcefully to the attention of the community. It did not create it.

When one examines the way in which homes for sale indicate which neighborhood school the house is zoned for, the anxiety about children being sent to other schools, and the inconveniences which will be endured in order to retain neighborhood school identity, he gets the impression that status-driven people lose sense of community as they seek to restrict into ever smaller circles, the encounters they have with the wider society. It was only after the fourth bond election that the city was able to persuade the citizens to accept a community-wide comprehensive high school. The institution is now justly a matter of community pride. It is one of a decreasing number of things about which people share "community". We turn now to the issue of racial imbalance per se, in the elementary schools.

Proposed Solutions Examined

The consultant has studied most, if not all the plans which have been submitted to the Board of Education. He has likewise attempted to see how these could be adapted, if necessary, and given weight to each of the factors present in the situation. In order, these proposals are:

1) *Open Enrollment*

This is in operation in New York City at the present time. Certain schools which are over-crowded and have high percentages of Negro children are designated "sending schools" and other with certain percentages of "others" (a term used to denote children of backgrounds other than Negro and Puerto Rican) declared "receiving" schools. The city provides transportation for these children to leave their neighborhoods at their parent's request and go to schools away from their own locality.

This program seems to have the following limitations for Mount Vernon:

a) There is no space of consequence in schools outside such impacted neighborhoods.

b) The schools which are trying hardest to retain a white population would perhaps proportionately lose more white children than Negroes, since all would be free to apply.

c) The responsibility would be placed upon the parent to seek an integrated education for his child, rather than that the school system meet its responsibility by arranging the encounters of children with each other as an educational experience.

d) This program would tend to siphon off the most concerned leadership of the Negro community and leave these low status schools even lower in status, thereby compounding the very issue the school system seeks to resolve.

e) It would tend to shield the community from social concern about the problem as it relates to all children, because the leadership could say to any parent "If you don't like the school just apply to some other which you do like." This would guarantee that the aggrieved community could never protest inadequate education.

f) It would leave the Nathan Hale School de facto segregated. It would make no appreciable difference on the racial imbalance of the other schools.

g) The fact that parents and their children would leave schools and make the extra effort to go to others would be an implicit admission that some schools are not as good as others, and that some children are forced to go to them would only further traumatize them in their perceptions of self. It would further traumatize the whole community—white as well as Negro—as it lived with the admission that part of the community was content to enjoy its unshared privilege. It would teach the opposite of what the schools would be expected to teach in citizenship.

2) *Special Ability Schools*

This proposal was that children be rated on their ability, and assigned in such a way that all schools would serve only one layer of talent. Thus one school would serve the brightest, another the slowest, with the remainder of the schools taking their pro rata share at the ability level. This was rejected for the following reasons:

a) Such schools would emphasize scholastic performance to the detriment of citizenship values. The consultant's point of view is that it would deprive each layer of the opportunity to learn the skills of citizenship involved in living in a world of differences.

b) It would tend to further deprive those who are culturally deprived, since they would tend to be concentrated at the lower academic level.

c) It would require that a child change schools each time he lost his standing or raised his standing in rank order with other children of his grade throughout the school system.

Such a school would have as a major advantage the grouping of children by schools on an ability basis. The ability basis would be that of capacity to take tests. It would undoubtedly create new problems of socio-cultural concentrations.

d) It would involve all the problems of busing and lunches, which are dealt with later.

3) *The creation of one educational center*

This would be set in the middle of the community where all children could go to school together. Such a program would be highly desirable, if it could be executed. This could be a plaza type development which could bring to bear the greatest economy in use of materials, supervision and special facilities—such as audio-visual and other teaching aides.

Such a school would have the advantage that it would erase the possibility that any school was worse than any other. The entire community, rather than one neighborhood school alone, would absorb the impact of the changes to be brought about. What one segment of the community suffered or enjoyed would also be the lot of all.

With new facilities, new dimensions of education could be opened to the community. Special emphasis on maturation levels, on special aptitudes, on new types of facilities to present school could afford alone, would be possible.

This plan was passed over, rather than rejected. Largely, it must be confessed, because there was doubt that the community would accept it in the immediate future. It is only hoped that experiments with less imaginative palliatives will not jeopardize the great chance the community has by letting the timeliness of the proposal pass.

4) *The development of a sixth grade school to serve the entire community*

This proposal has many meritorious aspects. It would move the community one grade nearer the desirable objective of a community-wide school organization.

If such a plan were adopted, it would be the consultant's opinion that the school in which the greatest Negro imbalance now obtains would be expanded to take some of the pressure of ethnic imbalance off three other schools, so that they can better hold the white children who now attend them. The trends of population indicate the growth of Negro enrollment has about levelled off in all four of these schools.

While these schools all have proportions of over 50 per cent Negro—the critical point in Allen's directive—they are not completely segregated schools.

However, there is another possibility which would go far to correct this problem and at the same time enhance the entire reorganization. It would be this consultant's suggestion that the kindergarten be enlarged to also include the nursery school year and that this early childhood school become a major experiment. It is the thought here that it should be different in program and philosophy from the usual early childhood programs, in that it would give special attention to readiness to participate in academic schooling.

Such schools would be selective of its students, and would recruit broadly—so as to represent the entire school system. Its program would involve experimenting with whatever new and frontier ideas there were in the field of education. It would possess a concentration of all the latest equipment needed for its operation. It would be the testing ground for all the new ideas which might conceivably have merit for the school system. It would fit the model of the demonstration school which is frequently attached to colleges and universities, except it would stay experimental. It should be understood that what is here envisaged is not a special school for the gifted. It would be a representative group of youths who would come to this facility because their parents would like for them to be involved in the frontiers of educational experimentation. Such a school would have another advantage. It would provide a "built-in" pattern of in-service teacher training. Staff could be rotated to work there as special projects for which they had competencies were undertaken. The results of their experience could be constantly fed back into main stream of educational endeavor in such a way that the entire program would be constantly enriched.

The Proposal

We come now to what is considered by your consultant as the most feasible approach to the problem. It is not a solution. It can be either interim, as the community moves toward more creative designs, or it can be permanent if it seems to work.

It is one which can be implemented next September, thus affording evidence of good faith—which delayed proposals would not afford.

It is simply to change the pattern of school organization from the present Kindergarten through sixth grade operation to one in which the kindergartens would be left in each neighborhood untouched, and the remainder of the elementary division divided so the school system would then have a uniform organization with certain schools serving children from first through third grades, others serving from fourth through sixth grades. The schools north of the railroad would then be designated as first through third grade schools, and those below the tracks as fourth through sixth grade schools. The system then would have a 3-3-3-3-school organization with three grades in each division from the first through the twelfth grades. This arrangement has the following advantages and disadvantages:

1) It would require considerable busing of children from one neighborhood to another.

2) It would require the development of lunchroom service which is not now provided.

3) It would add one extra change in schools in the early childhood and elementary years. This would be necessary under the plan outlined in the sixth grade school, except that it would come in the third year rather than the sixth.

4) It might bring the entire community to a tipping point of mass white withdrawal.

With regard to advantages:

1) It would bring all the community's children and parents to confrontation with each other and thereby erase the provincialism of the neighborhood school.

2) It would assist the entire school system cushion the change of the neighborhood absorbing it alone.

3) It would allow larger concentrations of children of one maturation level, so the school system could better orchestrate its resources to educate each given segment of its youth.

4) It would eliminate all complaints of ethnic imbalance, for it could distribute the population through zoning of schools so that a balance could be maintained.

5) It could, in this consultant's opinion, make a massive contribution to saving the South Side of town as a racially integrated section, and thereby ultimately save the whole community from losing its ethnic balance.

6) It would make a significant contribution to development of community mentality—as contrasted to the narrower neighborhood chauvinism which now exists.

7) It can be put into operation next fall.

Let us discuss some of these items in detail:

Busing of Children

First is the philosophical aspect of the problem. A large segment of America's children ride buses to school. The most exclusive education—private schools—depends upon buses extensively. Obviously too long a ride would produce fatigue, but the school district is small enough that no child should be too inconvenienced.

Second is the expense. This plan would perhaps require that 1,275 children go from the North Side to the South Side of town. In return it would require that 1,526 children from the south end of town go to the north. How many would be bussed would depend upon what regulations were made by the Board of Education.

The extra expense of this operation would depend in part on how it was done, and in part what help the state would afford. It would seem possible to run the buses on a belt arrangement which would operate both clockwise and counter clockwise and take all children within easy walking distance of the schools without the type of turn-around most often used. Thus the cost would be held to a minimum.

Another expense which would be entailed would be the transportation for the parochial school children of the community. This estimate is not available at present. Some intimation of it could be gained from the New Rochelle experience. That system which has about 300 more children in public schools than Mount Vernon budgeted $80,000 for busing approximately 350 children of the public and parochial schools. They estimate that slightly more than half that allocation will be used for parochial children. If the comparisons hold, the estimate would be slightly more than $100 per child for each one transported. However, due to the small size of the community and the fact that it would be a two-way bussing, these figures could be reduced drastically, in all likelihood.

Another aspect of the expense consideration is the possible assistance of the state in such a program. Present policy will allow reimbursement of 90 per cent of transportation for all elementary children who are hauled more than one and one-half miles. This would not apply to a large portion of the children in this arrangement, however. In the Commissioner's inquiry the request was made for additional costs, if any, and the time plan. There is concern in his office about the financial burden on school systems which undertake such programs. There is anticipation that requests will be made of the legislature for some appropriation to assist with the cost.

Lunch Room Facilities

Because of the density of population it has not been necessary to have lunch room facilities for the elementary grades. Each school serves a small enough radius that all children can go home to lunch. The schools close for this hour and the buildings are not supervised. This would not be possible under the proposed arrangement. Capital funds would be required to make lunch facilities available. This, of course, would be an added expense. It would, at the same time, however, not be an unmixed blessing. Such an arrangement would free mothers from being home at the lunch hour. It would allow for public assistance with food for children whose families are in need. It would relieve mothers who work from making lunch arrangements for their children. It would assure some semblance of balance to lunch diets. It would also relieve much of the unsupervised activity of children on the streets during the lunch hour. One only has to be in the downtown area during the lunch hour when the school is dismissed to realize how pressing this problem can be.

By the same token, however, it will involve new responsibilities for teachers, since they will be required to monitor these lunch arrangements, and supervise the children while they are under their care at the lunch hours. This may take some extra expense.

However, with some planning, it is believed that the proposed program need not wait on these capital fund arrangements. Milk and a hot soup could supplement food brought by the children and lunch could be dealt with through improvised arrangements this autumn.

Interruption of Elementary School Experience

This arrangement would obviously interrupt the six years of continuous neighborhood school attendance. It would require that all children divide time between sections of the community for their work. From the physical point of view this is some inconvenience, perhaps. From the standpoint of education, however, there are no data known to this consultant which would indicate that change of schools in such a situation would be a deterrent to academic progress. This would obviously depend upon how it is handled. Under the right circumstances, it could be an instrumentality of worth for weaning a child from dependency, extricate younger ones who live in the shadow of older ones, and create a situation where new confrontations call for new resources within the child which he did not suspect he possessed.

The Tipping Point

The most serious consideration which any of these plans presents is the danger of the "mixing" bringing the community to the tipping point at which there would be a mass withdrawal of whites from Mount Vernon or at least from the public schools. What that point is depends upon many factors. However, if the children who are in the elementary division of the school system were equally distributed in every class in each grade, at present, there would be 43 children out of every hundred who are Negro. Would this prove to be the point at which such a mass withdrawal would take place? It would do neither the cause of intergroup relations nor the education of the Negro children any good to face a school system deserted of whites.

The experience of such mass rejection would be most traumatic. On the other hand if the children and parents who constitute together only 20 per cent of the total population of Mount Vernon can produce such a desertion of its school system, in a community which has as good relations between the groups as exists in this community, then what is done with the schools will not matter much any way.

There are many reasons to believe that this would not happen. In the first place the Negro population on the South Side by and large, does not fit the stereotype of being slum people. For the most part they are peers of their neighbors. A look at the median years of schooling completed in that section suggests the point.

Median years of Schools Completed by Persons over 25 Years of Age, South Side of Mount Vernon, N. Y., 1960, by Census Tracts, Compared with Mount Vernon's Entire Population.

Tract Number	*Median Years School Completed (Over 25 Years of Age)*
25	8.9
26	10.1
27	10.1
28	8.7
29	8.6
30	8.8
31	10.7
32	9.9
33	12.1
34	12.0
MV Total Population	11.3

The import of these data is to indica
that integration succeeds best when peop
come together as peers. It suggests th
the present interracial encounters on t
South Side are between peoples who a
somewhat similar in socio-economic statu

Data also indicate that there are ma
white people living in the area who do n
at present send their children to the pu
lic schools. As mentioned earlier, the
were 1.17 white children between t
ages of 5 and 14 for each Negro youth
the South Side in 1960. In the schools
December 1961, however, there was on
.52 white youths for each Negro child
the public schools, grades one throu
five.

As has been pointed out, much of t
issue has been created by the increase
Negro families with children who depe
upon public education, rather than b
cause of the mass exodus of white popul
tion from the schools. Since the fi
census was made December 1961 and t
November 1963 census there has been
loss of only 205 white children from t
elementary schools. The greater part
the imbalance is through the gain of 4
Negro children. It is the belief here, th
if the total school system absorbed the
abrupt changes, so that no one neighbo
hood school was overbalanced, white pe
ple would stay in these areas and co
tinue to patronize a community-wi
school system.

Another aspect of climate relates
quality of education. More will be sa
about this later.

The last factor of significance on t
problem of "tipping point" relates to t
growing difficulty of finding neighbo
hoods in which white people can esca
encounters with people of other colo
The anti-discrimination laws, togeth
with a growing conscience on the part
many whites, is opening doors to Neg
residential living in many places whe
they have been shut previously. Increa
ingly it is hard to find hiding places
lily-white suburbs. Also it is becomi

increasingly difficult to pay tuition costs, or find religious schools where these encounters can be avoided. If Mount Vernon deals with the issue correctly, it is this writer's judgment that a rearrangement of the school organization as outlined above would stabilize the neighborhood, and bring a new sense of pride to the community for a job well done.

Now let us turn to the positive aspects of this suggestion.

It would erase the neighborhood school mentality. Because the opportunities for one's own children would depend upon whether such comparable opportunities were provided for others, the image of the community would be refused from one's neighborhood to total community. Whites in the north end of town would realize that when the city administration did not enforce occupancy laws and allow middle class Negroes' investments in residences to be jeopardized by becoming surrounded by other houses cut up into two and three units, that it is their own homes which are being jeopardized thereby. For it will be reflected in the schools which all the community share. When a new school building is needed it will be the concern of all the community, for all will have a stake in it, for there will be the potentiality that the children of all will use it. When a building becomes a deleterious influence in the neighborhood, it will be to the advantage of all to use the tools of neighborhood conservation to do something about it, for anyone's children may have to pass it on their way to school. Under this arrangement the people north of the tracks will not be encouraged to think of the New Haven Railroad tracks as a cordon sanitaire which divides them from meaningful identification with the remainder of the community.

A major aspect of this program has been hinted at in many places. It is the issue of quality of education. Many white people indicate they would like to have their children associate with Negro children, but they fear that any considerable disruption of present program will upset academic standards. They fear that wider ranges of ability grouping will reduce the ability of teachers to lead children in growth experiences without penalizing the bright ones. Some have images of inner-city "blackboard jungle" types of classroom chaos imprinted firmly in their minds. Perhaps the most widely held value of middle class parents is that they will give their children "a better chance than they ever had." That better chance usually in their thoughts does not include mixing with those who are lower in social status and those of different ethnic bacground to themselves—especially when the ethnic background is usually identified with lower social class. The "better chance" frequently means "coddled" children in as antiseptic suburban neighborhood as possible. Hence whatever program is projected must have as its basis a firm commitment to an imaginative, innovative educational program of a high quality. This report is not an evaluation of the school's present academic program. However, the following points are suggested:

1) *Desegregation or redistribution of children will, of itself, produce many discernible benefits in educational quality.* Some have referred to desegregation as "just mixing of bodies". This is not altogether true. Few question the citizenship values which are inherent in such a desegregation program. The most basic part of a citizenship curriculum is the decision as to who is going to attend school with whom. There cannot be the guarantee that the children will get along with each other in such desegregated programs. This will depend upon the climate created by the school and the community for the encounter. Many stereotypes will be removed concerning people, however. For instance, the image about the people south of the railroad as being all economically deprived, culturally disadvantaged people will be dispelled. The number of middle class culturally advantaged Negroes is quite high in the area. The idea of middle

class children being forced to associate with "rough" lower class children will be mollified. In Washington, D.C., for instance, Negro parents were so overzealous about how their children appeared when they first went to school with the whites, that the school authorities became concerned lest such pressures keep them from behaving "naturally". A great incentive will be afforded the Negro children to achieve, academically because they will be in competition with peers who set paces for them to follow. The stereotypes about the deleterious neighborhoods in which Negroes will live will be altered, for the children of all will be attending schools in such areas. Where there are intimations that such conditions exist, it is a foregone certainty that something will be done about them, for they will then affect all the children.

2) *Special emphasis will be placed on early childhood education.* The suggestion has already been made that there should be a kindergarten-nursery complex in the Hale School. If the 3-3-3-3 plan were adopted it would still be recommended. This unit would specialize in assisting the child whose backgrounds limited his preparation for the encounters with reading and other school subjects to overcome his academic handicap. There is justification for the hope that the arrangement of the right kinds of encounters would raise the I.Q. performance of such children (See Hunt. J. McV., "Intelligence and Experience, N. Y."; The Ronald Press, 1961, pp. 363). This need not be the grim "pushing" of children which is so characteristic of middle class parents. It would, however, not be the typical nursery and kindergarten school type of experience. It would be designed to prepare such children for school experience. Such a school would pay for its extra costs in increased school performance, absence of social disorganization and later welfare experience.

3) *Heavy emphasis will be placed on reading skills in the early childhood part of the elementary program.* Reading is the key which unlocks the world of symbolic communication. In fact the correlation between reading and other standard types of performance tests—including intelligence—are so high that one wonders if there is anything left of them if reading were factored out. It would be the thought here that no child should be allowed to leave the early childhood years' school (i.e. the first through third grade division) until he had achieved a mastery of reading. This would entail reading specialists, remedial reading resources, and all the assistance which is required to supply a child with this basic skill.

This does not mean that the facile minded child would be penalized—far from it. In the early childhood schools there would be sufficient concentration of children of this age group that combinations could be arranged which would make possible reading level without regard to age or grade, while at the same time allowing participation in other aspects of school life with groups of comparable grade level.

4) *The Dual Progress Plan or some such "modified grouping" of interest levels will be established in the elementary school.* It would do little good to undo concentrations of children by schools, only to have them reconcentrated in homogeneous groupings by ability within buildings. Hence, there is the need for some arrangement by which children can proceed at maximum rates as ability allows and as interest matures, and yet retain some sense of relation to the broad spectrum of ability levels of the community. This program pertains especially to grades four through six.

Other things equal, more Negro children score lower than whites most of the time. Where this is the case, the brightest Negroes are placed in the brightest classes and so on down the line, until in the lower ability classes there are more Negroes than whites. There are no discernible penalties placed on bright children in this school system. With the Dual Progress Plan this problem is taken care of by an arrangement through which the children share together common experiences in areas which are called cultural imperatives, (English, social studies, geography, history, government and current affairs) for one-half day and during the other half-day they are involved in what are called cultural electives (mathematics, science, art, music, foreign language). In the cultural electives, resort is made to ungraded progress so that those who are ready for these subjects, or those who have specific talents in any or all, can proceed at their own pace. This allows the development of common skills in citizenship, but allows for many significant advances in areas such as those in which special aptitudes are to be found. Such combinations of school organization—stressing as they would reading ability in the first three years, and the probing for specialized aptitudes skills and abilities in the latter years—would not deprive children of the skills of citizenship which become threatened when resort is made to ability grouping.

5) *More consideration will be given to welfare services.* We now know enough about growth and development to realize that the unfolding of personality is a seamless garment. Where welfare ends and education begins is an undefinable point. Emotional factors which enter into learning are insufficiently considered. For the economically disadvantaged this is a pressing problem. Through special funds secured from the State Department of Education for this purpose, one school district in this vicinity has been able to provide social work services to contact homes, supplement the insight of schools by information which would not otherwise be available, and above all to secure parental cooperation in school involvement.

This type of service has been instrumental also in bringing to bear other types of welfare assistance which might have been overlooked in helping youths escape the pinch of penury in those early years of school life.

6) *Provincialism will be overcome.* Another aspect of program which will be needed is to assist all youths to find their way to a familiarity with the broader world of culture than exists in their own provincial worlds. This applies to the suburban middle class child as well as to the so-called culturally deprived. With regard to the latter, however, the opportunity [illegible] visit museums, operas, and even such mundane spectacles as work situations where Negroes fill important jobs, have all proved beneficial. One advantage in having buses is their availability for transportation to such places of interest.

This type of activity has been at the heart of what has been called the "Higher Horizon" program of New York City.

7) *Testing and guidance programs will be expanded.* Group test scores cannot be relied upon for placement and programming with children who have been educationally disadvantaged. One school system which found itself with a skewed distribution of scores on such tests through individual testing that they had instead of normal distribution. Because test scores play such a large part in how school personnel relate to a child, it becomes highly important that such testing be accurate and exhaustive.

8) *Human Relations will be included in curriculum development.* Here is suggested a program designed to explore with children the relationship between their own backgrounds and experiences and the materials they study. It is well understood that most school readers and a considerable part of the illustrative material of curriculum content is built around rural or semi-rural middle class themes. They are built around the dominant group—which is the white. History and literature tend to exclude the contributions of any except the dominant groups in the society. It would be salutary to have the contributions of all explored so that all children

can identify with the common heritage. Thus, it is not just for the Negro child, but for all the children, that this part of the program has relevance.

This cannot be done merely by holding a few human relations meetings with speakers or with propaganda documents prepared by the intergroup relations agencies. It has to be done in the context of good education, honest inquiry, and scholarly endeavor. For this part of the program Human Relations workshops, run by the school system, designed to make these materials a basic part of curriculum for every grade level, are needed.

9) *Professional leadership in intergroup relations will be employed.* One of the most important aspects of such a program is a consistent in-service involvement of staff in the professional challenges which they face. This is many faceted. It involves knowing the behavioral science literature on inter-group differences. It also involves the care which must be exercised to keep such social science cliches as "low IQ," "low social class," "weak ego strength," "low aspiration level," and "inability to forego immediate pleasures for long range goals," from becoming pictures in the back of their heads predetermining what teachers see in the human material with which they work.

It involves a new concept of what the role of the school is in modern society. It is the difference between the school which educates children to be merely "middle class" parents and that which serves a dynamic role in providing for all children—from all socio-economic groups—the fulfillment of their learning potential. The latter school also educates the child who would otherwise be deprived of his "human rights" because of the happenstance of his birth.

This task requires a professional staff who can see beneath the surface of skin color, social class and trauma of heritage to discover the potential of the lowliest, educators with the skill to tease out of such a one his highest selfhood.

This is the dynamic as contrasted with the static role of the school.

10) *New concepts of school-community relationships will be discovered.* It is here contended that it is impossible for a staff to operate a permissive school which is conducive to learning in a climate of acceptance if the school and community are in tension. As such conditions come to exist and the leader of the school becomes insecure he tends to play his cards close to his chest, administer by directive, transmit his insecurities to his staff, and not take chances; not adventure into activities which cannot be defended. Hence, program becomes traditional and stultifying to the human spirit—both of the staff and the children.

This suggests the need for a staff person to deal with school-community relationships; someone with skills in the community organization, intergroup relations, adult education and social analysis who can become an interpreter to the school of the cross currents of community life and vice versa. It is not the thought here that such a person would organize the community for the school. On the contrary, it is the idea that such a person would be an interpreter of the one to the other. In the more indigenous developments which have shown promise in closing this cultural gap between groups, the ability to get the community involved has been of inestimable value.

11) *Special Remedial Projects will be developed.* The excellent beginning on the "Talent Scout" program should be expanded. In addition, special services such as coaching in reading and mathematics could be instituted in centers appropriately located in the less advantaged population.

Some Concluding Comments

Mount Vernon, N. Y. stands now on the threshold of a new history. It is headed for considerable tension and conflict as diverse interests fight out the new design of education for youth. This cannot be avoided. In some respects it is wholesome. It signifies that as a community it is brought to new confrontations. It is committed to a school system built around the neighborhood idea in elementary education and a community-wide secondary school program. It is committed to a school system of relatively small classes in self-contained classrooms. It has traditionally had a high socio-economic status group of youths which it trained well and placed in status colleges and universities. It now has a broader range of ability of children within its boundaries, and the school is called upon to perform a much more directive role of bringing these also into full scale participation. It cannot depend upon the academic quality of its intake of scholastics as it has done in the past, in what it does with the academic quality of those it has. This means a re-tooling of the faculty, a rethinking of the school's leadership, and a reappraisal of the community planning approaches used in the past. For instance, city planning still begins with the basic unit as the neighborhood school. This is completely outdated when building has shifted from single unit residences to large scale developments.) The past programs have focused on integrating the leadership of the new groups into the power structure of the community. This is evidenced by the extent to which almost any of the identifiable groups are divided politically in their loyalties. With the new group the color visibility makes it harder to achieve this integration. Hence there is resort to conflict as the group tries to force its interests into communal decision making.

As the conflict unfolds the community can go in one of two direction. The whites can flee, as they may do, from the encounter and leave the community an assortment of marginal people who live there because it is an area of least choice, and industry, or it can now rise to the challenge which it is, and move forward courageously to new dimensions of urban living. To do this will require skill in monitoring the conflict so that it does not become stultifying and destructive. It will require again, we repeat, making the schools so good that they are unsurpassed in the whole region. It will require that extreme alertness be maintained in city planning to use the tools of neighborhood renewal to guarantee that an investment in property anywhere in the city will be protected by fearless and efficient enforcement of zoning ordinances. It will also require that other services such as health and welfare be used to the fullest in areas which are integrated to assure that those who are living together in a neighborhood have the best assistance possible in making the neighborhoods the pleasantest places to live in the entire community.

The last quality which is perhaps most important of all is the involvement of every person possible to make the community the best place to live of any in America. In the last analysis high income and high socio-economic status do not of themselves make a community good. That can only be achieved by a people who are willing to achieve community with their fellow man. This quality is not the sole possession of any racial, social or economic group. It is the possession of men of good will wherever they exist. It is urgent that such persons now come forward and give leadership in this aspect of community they share in common more than any other—the schools their children attend.

The Report of the Citizens Committee on Racial Imbalance to the Mount Vernon Board of Education*

EDITOR'S NOTE: These are the highlights of the recommendations of the Committee.

THE COMMITTEE was guided by the principles contained in this excerpt from the Board's resolution on July 5, 1963: "This Board announces that it shall take immediate steps to carry out the elimination of racial imbalance in the intent of the letter received from Dr. Allen, Commissioner of Education for the State of New York. This Board believes that elimination of racial imbalance in Mount Vernon's public schools is one of the keys to greater educational opportunity and greater achievement for all our school children, and therefore, to greater personal fulfillment in life and more meaningful participation in a democratic society. This Board acknowledges the social and moral basis of eliminating racial imbalance of our schools. This Board regards the necessity of eliminating racial imbalance in Mount Vernon's public schools as an opportunity to raise further the educational standards and educational opportunities for all our school children. We regard this as an opportunity to introduce curricular innnovations and experimental techniques that will move us farther, and more rapidly, along the road to educational excellence than ever before."

The Committee arrived at a consensus on the following fundamental principles and premises:

1. That there are no significant differences in natural intellectual endowment among persons of different ethnic origins. Exhaustive scientific and historical studies support this conclusion of the American Association for the Advancement of Science: "The available evidence on the measurable differences among racial groups cannot properly support a challenge to the principle of human equality."

2. That the problem of racial imbalance in the schools, as it affected the Committee's mission, was inevitably interwoven in the character and quality of the education of all the children of Mount Vernon.

3. The Committee is of the opinion that the problem, while it has civil rights and housing implications, has basic educational issues, and it is these to which the Committee has addressed itself.

This Committee, and indeed the entire community of Mount Vernon, is fortunate to have as professional consultant on this matter Dr. Dan W. Dodson, Professor of Education and Director of the Center for Human Relations and Community Studies at New York University. Dr. Dodson's credentials as an educator and social scientist are known nationally and internationally. But in addition to technical competence, he has made vividly clear to all who have worked with him his stature as a human being, his understanding of the human condition, and his vision of the role of the educator in the American community and in fulfillment of the American Dream.

Dr. Dodson brought to the Committee a wide experience in dealing with similar situations in other cities in all their aspects —educational, social, and financial. Moreover, he saw Mount Vernon as a whole.

---

*Presented as the majority opinion, Feb. 13, 1964.

He saw its schools as they relate to the whole community. He saw its different neighborhoods as they relate to each other or, as is unfortunately often the case, fail to relate to one another. He saw the troubled, uncertain present of Mount Vernon and two alternatives for the future —stagnation and decay into a marginal community, or rebirth to "new dimensions of urban living."

The Committee agrees with Dr. Dodson that educational advancement through racial integration will not automatically insure the second outcome, but that this goal cannot be achieved without integration.

The Dodson Report

Nine of the ten members of the Committee are in agreement with Dr. Dodson's plan for dividing the elementary schools into a One-Three, Four-Six pattern as the most feasible method for eliminating racial imbalance. Of the nine, eight favor a phased implementation, which will be discussed further; one member dissents from this position and favors immediate implementation. This is the Committee's principal recommendation.

The Commitee inquired also into the the physical facilities and staffing policies in the schools. It examined the results of various standard achievement and I.Q. tests administered in all the schools and found that there is a discernible pattern of lower median scores in those schools with the greatest degree of racial imbalance and which are predominantly Negro.

It agrees with Dr. Dodson that, "It would be difficult to contend that there had been discrimination against schools as they became Negro. Factors such as class size, qualification of teachers, tenure of teachers, and expenditures for supplies and materials are as favorable for these schools as for the others."

Thus the Committee confirmed for itself what the Mount Vernon Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the New York State Board of Regents, the United States Supreme Court, and the preponderance of educational and psychological evidence concludes—that schools with predominantly Negro enrollment produce inequality of educational opportunity and fail to enable the children to realize their fullest educational potentialities.

The Committee is profoundly convinced of the fact that an essential element in any plan to improve educational opportunity in Mount Vernon is the elimination of racial imbalance through Dr. Dodson's proposal for the creation of Early Childhood Schools (grades one through three) in school buildings north of the New Haven Railroad tracks, and Middle Childhood Schools (grades four through six) in buildings south of the New Haven Railroad tracks, with no change in the present kindergarten arrangement.

The Committee favors a modification of Dr. Dodson's proposal to the extent that it recommends that this plan be instituted on a phased basis, with the first step to be completed in September 1964, and the final step or steps to be completed preferably by September 1965, but no later than by September 1966. It suggests this modification to afford an opportunity for an orderly transition, accompanied by a sound program of community interpretation, and because of the information provided to it as to the pracitical difficulties of making the required physical changes during the next summer for the entire elementary department, as well as the present lack of classroom facilities to provide for the maintenance of class size of 25, which it regards as basic to the design.

The Committee wishes to set forth its reasons for rejecting some of the alternative designs, including, but going beyond, Dr. Dodson's reasons for reaching this conclusion:

1. The Open Enrollment Plan relies upon parent option and action rather than community responsibility for solving

racial imbalance. Its consequences would be to leave the racially imbalanced schools intact, with a hard core of the less motivated and most deprived remaining after the others had elected the option of going to other schools.

2. Schools based upon ability levels would tend to promote an academic segregation which the Committee, along with a body of educational authorities, considers undesirable. They would also be difficult to admister fairly for all children; the variables are too great, and change occur too frequently, to fix precisely, a child's rank.

3. The proposal for the creation of a community-wide sixth grade school, and the dispersal of the Nathan Hale students to schools north of the New Haven Railroad tracks, has basic disadvantages that far outweigh its advantages. It would, with the resolution of the junior high school question, bring about equitable racial balance down for the sixth grade and it would reduce the degree of imbalance which obtains at present.

But what happens in the sixth through twelfth grades depends largely upon the nature of the educational experience provided in the first five grades. If children are educationally handicaped in the first five grades and racial imbalance exists, the problem of giving them equal educational opportunity in the last seven grades is immeasurably compounded.

Educational retardation commences early and it accumulates. The prognosis for the poor reader is a dim one. It is generally agreed that the child from a disadvantaged environment tends to suffer in the development of the verbal and reasoning skills which are so essential to educational "readiness."

Viewed in the context of the Board of Education's strong resolve in its September 11 report to the Commissioner to avoid stop-gap measures, the Committee considers that the sixth grade proposal must be rejected as fundamentally a stop gap plan.

It has been demonstrated time and again in other communities that short term measures and partial solutions in this field extend and aggravate community tensions, delay the full committment necessary to make any plan of school integration work, and defeat the objective of advancing educational opportunity.

In sharp contrast, the Dodson Plan would establish a satisfactory racial balance and follow a logical pattern of child development. Further, it permits an economical concentration of resources at the point of best application, since the first three grades are usually reserved for the development of the skills essential for educational growth—especially reading and familiarity with number concepts—while grades four through six are where the content of the academic disciplines is introduced.

Community Response

This Committee, as much as any group of people in Mount Vernon, has in the last four months felt an increasing burden of responsibility about the prospects that face this community. It has been sensitive to the wide social and civic implications which will accompany any plan for resolving racial imbalance.

It can be assumed that the great majority of Mount Vernonites are sincerely concerned that an equal opportunity for successful achievement be afforded all our children. The Committee regards the plan outlined by Dr. Dodson with optimism, as designed to realize this aim.

The Committee has considered the following as major objections or reservations which will be expressed towards the plan.

1. *Abandonment of the Neighborhood School Pattern*

The neighborhood school is a long established institution, and any large alteration of it inevitably raises apprehensions. The Committee has concluded that while originally the neighborhood school provided a common community experience for all children, the patterns of sharp residential segregation which have developed have negated its basic democratic features. Only a new approach to the grouping of school children can restore the basic democratic value so fundamental to public education in a free society, namely a broad representative school experience for all children which brings together children of all segments of the community and affords equal opportunity for the best education.

The Committee has concluded that the disadvantages in abandoning the neighborhood school are overwhelmingly offset by the many gains achieved in advancing education through elimination of racial imbalance and achievement of integration.

2. *Busing*

The purported fear of adverse consequences from the transportation of children has become the expressed focus of much of the resistance when a physical rearrangement of pupils is proposed.

Yet, in Mount Vernon, for the forseeable future, transportation of children is the only way of achieving a more equitable balance which can end de facto segregation of Negro pupils and the consequent inferior education for the community's children.

What this Committee sees riding the buses are the hopes for rescuing the futures of individual children and improving their prospects for useful and happy lives. It also sees the advantages, which Dr. Dodson refers to, of creating a socially realistic environment which will provide meaningful encounters for white as well as Negro children.

Busing, as Dr. Dodson, points out, has not deterred those who seek private and religious school educations and summer day camp for their children.

3. *Educational Dilution*

This is the fear expressed that the education of fast learners will be inhibited by the presence in the same classroom of some children who are not at the same level of potential achievement, and who need remedial attention.

Gifted students can be frustrated and bored in any school.

We have no doubt that if such measures as the Dual Progress Plan, which provides for the development of common skills in citizenship while allowing for ungraded, individual progress in special aptitude areas, and the modified ability grouping that Dr. Dodson's report descusses leadership and competence, the brightest white middle-class child will prosper educationally in a racially integrated school system.

4. *Competitive Disadvantage*

There exists the fear that the children from deprived backgrounds and from schools of lower median achievement scores will be unable to compete successfully with children who have had better preparation and are more motivated towards academic success—thus confirming an already doubtful self-image and deepening the sense of educational defeat.

Dr. Dodson has outlined means by which the adjustment of children of different backgrounds can be accomplished: pre-school training, educational enrichment programs, modified ability groupings, flexible teaching arrangements and nursery schools.

The Committee further emphasizes the point that the Negro community in Mt. Vernon is not a slum, low-income community. As Dr. Dodson's data proves, the Negro community has a large percentage of middle-class children highly motivated and capable of participating on a par-intellectually with bright white middle-class children at the present time.

5. *White Exodus*

The belief has also been expressed that the proposed change will prompt a mass departure of white families from Mount Vernon to other communities, with the result that the degree of imbalance will become greater than ever.

Dr. Dodson's report contains a sobering reference to a "tipping point" which could trigger a mass withdrawal of whites from the community and children from the public schools. Should this happen, any plans for integration would be annuled. The extent to which this may occur is difficult to measure and determine. In Greenburgh the attrition was slight. Dr. Fitch surpassed in the whole region.

6. *Economy of means*

It is argued that the money that will go into transportation and the construction of lunchroom facilities would be employed to better advantage to strengthen efforts at educational improvements in the schools where there is a need for this.

This is a variation of the "separate but equal" school of thought. It claims that the solution to racial imbalance lies in pouring additional resources into imbalanced and segregated schools and in so arranging it (through special remedial help, smaller classes, etc.) that they may in fact be "separate but superequal."

But the Mount Vernon Board of Education and the weight of other experience and informed opinion all establish that separate cannot be equal.

7. *Discrimination in Housing and Employment.*

It has been contended that the disadvantaged position of the Negro is due to discrimination in housing and employment, that the attack should be launched in these areas rather than in the schools, which have not created this condition and are not in a position to change it.

We refer to Dr. Dodson's statement on the "stellar role" of education in American society. The Negro ghetto will be years in breaking up because housing is so much a matter of private ownership and private choice. But the schools belong to all the people, and achievement in the schools is one of the keys to greater employment opportunity.

Improvement will come by working on all fronts at the same time and improvement in education is one of these. While it is not the responsibility of the schools to eliminate job and housing discrimination it is certainly their responsibility to provide maximum educational opportunity for all children. Since racial imbalance is a deterrent to that objective, the schools must eliminate it.

Recommendations

1. That the Board adopt the Dodson Plan and implement it.
2. That plans for the educational program which is a vital part of the integration design be started at once and be introduced as rapidly as possible, rather than on a phased basis.
3. That the Board explore carefully the great potential of the pre-school center.
4. That the Board continue to avail itself of adequate outside consultant resources to insure that this educational program will be equal to our requirements and will represent the most informed and authoritative educational thinking.
5. That a summer school be established in 1964 for children in Grades Three through Six which will offer a wide range of subjets for acceleration, enrichment, and remedial purposes.
6. That in its choice of a new school superintendent, the Board give due weight to the importance of securing an educational leader with high technical qualifications and with an educational philosophy and social commitment adequate to this challenge.

We wish to thank the Board and Administration for having made such a generous disposition to us of facilities and personnel. This cooperation has contributed greatly to our work.

This Committee does not feel that it has discharged its entire function with the submission of this report and its recommendations. It stands ready to counsel with the Board in its consideration of the Committee's findings and proposals. Moreover, once the Board has declared its official position with respect to the actions it will take this Committee is prepared to share with it in the large task of achieving public understanding and acceptance.

The Minority Report of the Citizens Committee on Racial Imbalance to the Mount Vernon Board of Education

by Joseph S. Ragno*

EDITOR'S NOTE: These are the highlights of Mr. Ragno's recommendations.

The Purpose of This Dissent

The purpose of this report is not the creation of division and discord; rather, it is to present to the Board and to the citizens of our city a different view and evaluation which is aimed at a dispassionate appraisal of the problem and at illuminating the approaches to its solution.

I hope it will be understood that, although I differ in some basic assumptions and with the particular solution recommended by the majority view, there are wide and important areas, especially in the field of enrichment and compensatory programs, in which there is solid agreement.

Nothing herein contained should be interpreted as a disparagement of the members of the majority view; they are persons of the highest intellectual integrity who are sincerely dedicated to the job at hand. I consider myself fortunate indeed to have had the benefit of their dialogue.

The Issue and Some Assumptions

The issue raised by Dr. Allen's directive can be stated succinctly in the form of a syllogism:

Major Premise: A preponderance of Negro children in a particular school is an educational evil which must be eliminated.

Minor Premise: The city of Mount Vernon contains five elementary schools in which the Negro child is proponderant.

Conclusion: The preponderance of Negro children in the five schools of the city of Mount Vernon is an educational evil and must be eliminated.

Such a syllogism would not be considered strange had it been pronounced by a Goebbels or some other misguided racist. In fact, it was, enunciated by the Commissioner of Education of the State of New York, who, naturally, announced it in a context different from that of a bigot.

Commissioner Allen's reasons for seeking to eliminate this "racial imbalance" is that "the personality of these minority group children may be damaged."

This conclusion carries a basic assumption with which I cannot wholly agree. The assumption is that a grouping of Negro school children is bad and that the evil increases in proportion to the preponderance of Negro school children.

If this assumption is embraced by Negro intellectuals it will be the first time in the history of civilization that a racial group has ever adopted the thesis that their "togetherness," in preponderant numbers, results in an undesirable educational situation.

Naturally, such a thesis would not be, and is not, accepted by any thinking person of good will; it is the consensus of all respected psychological, educational and genetic authorities that the Negro innately is the physical and mental equal of any race on earth. With this I heartily agree.

---

*Presented as the opinion of a majority of one, Feb. 13, 1964.

It is precisely because of the innate equality of the Negro with his white counterpart that I question the validity of emphasizing racial imbalance. If imbalance there be, producing certain measurable deficiencies in the median achievement scores of preponderantly Negro schools, the imbalance producing such deficiency is not, and cannot be racial.

We must look elsewhere to seek out the competent producing causes of the correlation between lower achievement scores and preponderantly Negro schools.

The consultant, Dr. Dodson, and the members of the Citizens Committee have looked elsewhere. Investigation of a number of relevant factors have been made with reference to Mount Vernon's predominantly white and predominantly Negro schools.

a. Class size: no difference

b. Teacher qualification: no difference

c. Tenure of teachers: no difference

d. Supplies and materials: no difference

e. Gerrymandering: none

f. Employment of teachers: No discrimination

g. Assignment of teachers: no discrimination.

Since the Negro child is innately as intelligent as the white child and since facilities, teachers, class size etc., are similar, why, then, the acknowledged disparity in median achievement test scores?

I respectfully suggest that the answer lies both outside the school and within the school. Although it is less true in Mount Vernon than in other areas of Negro concentration, the Negro child generally is surrounded by a less favorable economic climate, with the myriad emotional, social and psychological effects that are correlated with economic pressures. In addition and not as a correlative of race, the Negro family unit has been generally less stable than the white family unit in the same area, due, undoubtedly, to the instability of the economic base of the family. As a result, the Negro youngsters enters the cloisters of learning with less serenity, less parental surveillance than his average white counterpart.

These factors, produced not by the schools, but by the unfortunate across-the-board prejudice of white contemporaries, a prejudice on the wane but still thickly encrusted, produce what the phrase makers call a culturally disadvantaged child. A reflective pause will elicit the conclusion that the child is not culturally disadvantaged, but that his blameless parents are caused to be by factors extrinsic to the school the child attends.

For brevity's sake, another factor outside the school tending to humble a Negro child's self-concept is the cruel and senseless omission from our media of communication, the newspapers, periodicals and especially television, of the role the Negro daily and historically plays and has played in our society. The Negro child, sensitive, curious, is deprived of seeing and sensing a true image of himself in the events about him. Adventure is for whites, love and affection the sole province of whites, reporting achievement in industry and science is as drearily color blind; with very rare and recent exceptions, people in advertising displays are always white, as if the Negro consumer were non-existent, and so on ad nauseam.

The factors within the school affecting the Negro child's motivation include the same myopia with reference to the Negro as has been delineated immediately above. Textbooks so rarely illustrate or dwell upon the Negro and his social experience that a visitor from Mars might incorrectly conclude that our country had but a handful of Negroes rather than the twenty million it has.

Both the consultant's report and the majority report of the Citizens Committee largely skirt the problem of the teacher unskilled and untutored in the special problems of the Negro pupil as a total personality. The Negro child like the Negro adult has more pressures to contend with that the white child. Special skills, implemented by special teachers, are necessary to promote a child's concept of himself and his abilities.

That Mount Vernon has been insensitive to the greater need of remedial specialists, consultants, and experts in the field of human relations is, perhaps, the inevitable result of its emphasis during the past 15 years on a "Building Program," without an equal emphasis on aiding pupils in achieving up to their potential.

The writer concedes, therefore the need for reform and action to combat the problem of under-achieving students, both Negro and white.

What the writer does not concede is that this problem of underachievement is a result of mere "racial imbalance" and that the attaining of a "racial balance" will produce any measurable results.

The Minority Recommendation

I am in full agreement with Dr. Dodson's and the majority's view that a program of broad enrichment in curriculum and reorientation in educational attitudes is sorely needed. There is no need, therefore, to further burden this report with an exposition along these lines.

We have today a high school which is attended by all pupils of every color, religion, and background. When such a high school was in the throes of birth, its need to exist was premised upon the educational need for such a facility. Although there were heard, now and again mutterings pro and con connoting racial overtones, the fiscal logic of having one high school instead of two, coupled with the educational enrichment of having commercial, vocational, and academic curricula available to all under one roof, were the banners which won over the public. Had the emphasis been reversed, i.e. if the comprehensive high school had been promoted as a racial issue I doubt that it would have met with much public acceptance.

What of the cost for the enrichment program, guidance counselors, remedial specialists, etc.? This report recommends that $100,000 or $200,000 or whatever it takes annually to make the Mount Vernon school system the finest in the nation should be expended consonant with a sane fiscal policy. In this regard, a zealous and determined recruitment plan to employ the very best in the nation should be launched with the sober acknowledgment that you must pay the best to get the best.

Epilogue

MANY FRUITFUL QUESTIONS regarding American education are being raised as a result of the current interracial dialogues. The color of the Negro has made visual many problems hitherto glossed over or hidden. His experience has dramatized the need for re-thinking such human relationships as these:

One: The role of education in social process is being re-examined.

It was found in Mount Vernon that the achievement-norms of a third-generation Italian neighborhood school were lower than those for some neighborhood schools for more recent arrivals in the community. The reaction of one Italian-American to the racial confrontation that precipitated this discovery was: "Thank God! Maybe now we shall have a better education for everyone." It was this kind of insight that led the U.S. Commissioner of Education to say that the civil rights movement would lead to the improvement of all the schools of America.

Two: The sanctity of the neighborhood school is being challenged.

Part of the motivation to learn relates to one's sense of self-worth. That sense of self-worth is related to one's identity with institutions and social structures. When a community maintains schools based on the socio-economic structures implicit in our present neighborhood patterns, the children in the high-prestige schools are challenged to learn more than those at the opposite end of the social scale. Moreover, morale is harder to maintain in the lower status schools. And this obtains for the attitudes of the teachers as well as the children. Therefore, since it is not possible to change our housing patterns easily or quickly, it becomes the task of school planners seeking good for all children of the community to break through the old patterns and provide schools in which all children may have access to truly equal challenges and opportunities, whatever the neighborhoods whence they come.

Three: The relationship between individual and cultural deviance is being recognized.

When one applies tests that have been standardized on the children of the majority group to children whose experience has been in a minority sub-culture, i.e., the Negro, they do not work. Moreover, what many once thought was the "absolute" of the I.Q. is now recognized as merely the result of conditioning according to the patterns of the culture of the majority. Such a measurement fails when applied to one born outside these patterns, without reference to his potential ability.

Four: The limitations of the scope of "science" are being questioned.

In the recent past we believed that the key to the door of human potential was research. We now recognize that the clichés of the science of human behavior can become barriers which the children of the minority must overcome before they can achieve self-respect. Social science literature is replete with discussions of "low I.Q.," "low social class," "weak ego strength," "lack of father image with which to relate," "matriarchial domination." The teacher who accepts literally the negation implied in these descriptions will be unable to recognize the impulse to learn and the desire to create in children thus doomed to "infant damnation."

Five: Present class grouping practices are being reconsidered.

Homogeneous grouping within the school is another form of de facto segregation. Within its patterns, the culturally disadvantaged child can be as separate and uneqaul as he would be in the de jure segregated school before the U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1954.

Six: The goals of scholarship and those of citizenship must be reconciled.

Anxiety about scholarship is a standard reaction to efforts to achieve the citizenship goals of education. While no one decries scholarship objectives, such aims untinctured by citizenship values can be America's most dangerous threat. These complementary goals should not and must not become incompatible in American education.

Seven: A conflict in our national values must be resolved.

The great documents by which we live are not "research" but are scholarship seasoned with human concern. Can our children learn to apply the great ideologies of our heritage if they are shielded from encounters with one another that teach them to live in a world of difference in color? Can the dominant group live in unshared privilege in "lily white" ghettos without experiencing dry rot? It is doubtful if they can. Race relations is the domestic proving ground where the issue is being decided.

New Rochelle and Mount Vernon have faced this great dilemma of our time. Most other communities in the North have yet to encounter it. The fate of America may well be decided on how they, too, meet this confrontation with their social consciences.

Dan W. Dodson